

# The UnderWorld Initiation

A Journey Towards Psychic Transformation



The authentic core of the Western Mysteries revealed  
through oral traditions, Celtic myth and legend

R.J. Stewart

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'The Rosicrucian Vault as Sepulchre and  
Wedding Chamber' © CAITLIN MATTHEWS 1985

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*R. J. Stewart, August 1984*

## OPENING THE ARCH OF HEAVEN

IN THE NAME OF THE SON OF LIGHT  
THE SON OF MARIA  
KEYSTONE OF THE ARCH OF HEAVEN  
WHO JOINS AS ONE  
THE FORKS UPHOLDING OF THE SKY.

HIS THE RIGHT HAND  
HIS THE LEFT HAND  
HIS THE RAINBOW LETTERS  
IN THE RICH FERMENTED MILK.  
MAY YOU GO IN HIS WAY  
IN ALL SHAPES OF SHAPES  
IN ALL COLOURS OF COLOURS.

IT IS THE SON OF LIGHT  
THE SON OF MARIA, SAYING,  
'ASK IN MY NAME,  
YOU SHALL NOT BE CAST OUT'

DO YOU SEE US HERE  
O SON OF LIGHT?  
SAYS THE SON OF LIGHT  
'I SEE.'

*Ancient invocation of Christ*





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## Author's Note

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*The UnderWorld Initiation* is divided into three sections, and this structure and the sub-structure of each section is ordered according to traditional symbolic models. As most of this topology is explained in the text and the associated diagrams, no previous explanation is necessary at this stage.

The three basic parts of the book, however, are as follows:

1. A theoretical text describing the stages of the Under-World Journey and their possible results in terms of psychic transformation.
2. Samples of initiatory verses from oral tradition, with notes upon each verse and their relationship to magical symbols in the Western Traditions.
3. A practical exercise, appendices and notes. The appendices are typical examples of the material generated by application of magical theory, and are intended to give concrete form to the many inter-linked theories and symbolic connections met throughout the main text and verse examples.

Chapter 10 is an imaginary narrative Journey to the UnderWorld, for use in meditation and visualization. It employs many of the key initiatory or transformative symbols known to tradition. There is a set of operating notes

for the Narrative, to give the reader a firm grounding before attempting the sequence in person. Although the text is modern and simple in style, it is not a fabrication or a derivation of psychological association or similar techniques. It follows a very ancient tradition, embodied in previous centuries by the verses and tales of our collective repertoire of magical and poetical lore.

Appendix 1 is a typical account of 'seership' at an ancient site, taken verbatim from notes made at the time of the visit. Acceptance of this account is not essential for following the arguments of the main text, and it is offered as an example rather than as evidence or proof of any facet of the UnderWorld tradition. The inclusion of an extract from what would normally be regarded as 'private notes' is also offered to reveal the quite innocuous and poetical nature of seership. Far from being concerned with fictitious 'powers' or 'superiority', it is merely a mode of consciousness in which relative history and cultural material is suspended in favour of paradoxical insights, or fresh world-views.

As with many books on magical and esoteric subjects, this one is littered with Capitalized Letters. These are not used in a random manner, however, nor do they indicate shortage of typeface on the part of the printer, as was often the case with the early works on alchemy or metaphysics.

A simple system has been followed to free the reader from pages of jargon, explanatory sentences, or from the accumulation of a technical vocabulary that makes reading tedious. In most cases a capitalized word, such as Tradition or Seer, refers to a specific definition which has already been given in the text. In the use of the term 'Innerworld', for example, the meanings ascribed to this word are analysed, and a definition made of the manner in which it is used in our text. From that point onwards, Innerworld is capitalized to define its use.

A few traditional terms are also capitalized, as this is a poetic convention. In mystical terminology, or magical vocabulary, it seems correct to say 'the Sons of Light', for where proper names of deities are concerned, the name is often the function. The Guardian is known by a number of names in tradition, inscription, iconography or literature. The word 'guardian' appears both as a descriptive name of

an imaginative being, and in its normal usage.

Religious use of capitals is avoided wherever possible, and the emphasis suggested by capitals is not used in a religious or breathlessly mysterious manner in this text. 'God' is not generally used, nor is 'Angel', for gods, goddesses and angels are technical terms to the esoteric student, and not dogmatically important or revered stereotypes.

UnderWorld has been deliberately spelled in an unusual manner to give it emphasis, however, and to separate it from the unfortunate connotation of organized crime that 'underworld' has today.

The term 'Mystery' has a specific meaning in a historical context, and it is frequently used in our argument. A Mystery was an organized structure which taught metaphysical theory and practice to its members. Mysteries consisted not only of human membership, but of orders of beings in other worlds. These beings were symbolized according to the philosophy and cultural ambience of the Mysteries themselves. A Mystery, therefore, was a bridging structure between worlds, or modes of consciousness. In keeping the general use of capitals, it seems much simpler to say 'the Western Mysteries' than to say 'the occidental European structures of psychic integration and mutual exchange of shared symbolic units of non-verbal communication'.

I am aware that specialists exist who would prefer authors to write in such a manner, or preferably not to write at all upon such subjects, but I prefer Mysteries.



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# **Preface**

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This book deals directly with magical matters; specifically with a powerful esoteric tradition native to the Western Hemisphere. For many, a tradition is something vague, quaint and dull; perhaps an escapist fantasy or a political and commercial symbol used for manipulation. In the following chapters, however, tradition is regarded as an enduring and potent mode of learning, transformation and exposition.

Tradition has levels and structures of meaning, living, and new experience that transcend not only the trivial definition given above, but also the illusory personality of the individual.

In modern works of occultism or esoteric studies there is a strong tendency towards lip-service and justification through the use of ephemeral and fashionable schools of reason. The holistic and harmonic metaphysics of the Ancients have frequently prompted modern apologists for occult studies to amalgamate their art with intellectual sleight-of-hand and to suggest that all attempts at delving into the unknown regions of consciousness are essentially identical. This popular trend is based upon a typical misunderstanding of the old writings and teachings, filtered through the spurious theosophy of the nineteenth century. The result is a very weak pap that cannot nourish our imagination adequately. Such vague attempts at rendering



magic respectable are not followed here.

Magic is not respectable, not acceptable, not fashionable. Genuine esoteric traditions, by which we must mean those that work through effort and discipline rather than through salesmanship or social-club atmosphere, are extremely ancient. While great age is not essentially virtuous, even the most superficial understanding of magic should be founded upon the fact of its endurance and continuity over long periods of historical time.

Many of the reasons for this remarkable continuity are given in our later chapters. Some are simply historical, archaeological, literary and obvious; others are recondite, obscure, even ridiculous until properly understood. No excuses are offered for magic here; it is established, it is aged and deep; it will endure and flourish when theories that currently dominate Western culture with regard to consciousness have been ground away by the mill of time. Magic will endure beyond their faintest echoes into a future unknown.

During years of research and study in folklore, mythology and the enduring traditions, I slowly became aware of a specific tradition within the West. This tradition was almost lost, ignored or corrupted by the authorities in occult or mystical literature from the nineteenth century to the present day. Yet it is clear for all to seek, find and enter within. Why was it not found in the many modern books and courses that taught occult subjects? Could it be that the magical orders and the individual adepts of the last two to three centuries had lost their most potent magical tradition?

More disturbing than the absence of this primal lore from the teaching of the famous adepts and authors, was the constant development of a series of justifications, used to plug holes within the weak intellectual edifice. The lost tradition could, after all, be recovered by individual search; otherwise I could not have stumbled over it myself. The absence of this central teaching of Western metaphysics was further compounded by attempts at materialist justification according to modern psychology.

Was this unnatural marriage of magic astrology and other esoteric studies to modern psychology, nothing more nor less than a series of attempts to obscure the sad truth that

the genuine way had been lost?

In seeking to answer these highly contentious questions, I have made no attempt at modern psychological justification. Indeed, I believe that psychology is the epitome of gross materialism, and should not be connected to the study and operation of magic. The reader should be aware that magic, astrology and alchemy are all artistic sciences in their own right. They derive from a protean body of ancient lore and tradition which absorbs and regenerates the deepest understanding of our individual and group consciousness. Modern psychology, in contrast, is an extremely impoverished relation. It uses their vocabulary and conceptual models in a parasitic manner, frequently claiming credit for 'discoveries' which are plain to see in Western traditions which were ancient before the Romans came to Britain.

The foundation of the esoteric material offered in this book is my attempt to explain and to fill that gap in the modern literature which claims to represent the Western traditions. Furthermore there is a deliberate rejection of the pernicious emasculating role of psychology in its attempts to 'explain' magical mystical and metaphysical experiences and teaching. As a result of this position, many parts of the argument and evidence may be offensive to those who readily accept certain authorities, whether intellectual, scientific, occult or religious.

In the assembly and writing of the following chapters, the acts and beliefs of the native traditions have been compared to those of orthodox religion, occult literature from the Middle Ages to the present day, and modern pseudo-paganism in the light of authentic pre-Christian practices. This academic veneer, however, is not the main fabric of the argument. The heart of the work lies in the active imagination, in the inner transformation triggered by the magic of the primal tradition from which the sources listed above have devolved. It is this rich inheritance of knowledge and understanding, this root tradition, which is so trivially usurped by the infant profession of psychology.

The tradition to which I refer, the 'UnderWorld Initiation' is essentially oral and practical. It must be experienced, and not merely read through, labelled and classified.

In our present culture we have lost the oral tradition of shared and group learning in favour of mass-media entertainment. At the same time, the practical experience of that same tradition has been freely handed over to agencies exterior to the individual consciousness, under the overall supervision of the medical profession. In other words life is no longer lived *by* the individual, but lived *for* the individual through control of the social group. If such conclusions seem extreme, they may be leavened with an inner sense of humour, and must certainly not be regarded as occult hierarchical pronouncements! Most truly magical material does not give itself freely to written exposition; it operates upon the levels of poetry, myth, music, and most important of all, riddles.

The riddle, which occurs frequently within all oral traditions worldwide, is a very potent means of altering awareness, and is far more than a mere game with words. The appearance of riddles in human communication should not be rationalized or explained in a facile manner as is the current trend. Nor are riddles mere entertainment from pre-television culture, though at their most superficial and initial stages, they are used in games and family interplay. Some of the deeper powers of riddling are suggested in our later chapters, in which the initiatory function of ancient verses is explained.

Readers of 'occult' or 'esoteric' literature frequently demand of an author if he or she has practised that which is preached. My personal reply to this inevitable and important question is this: a tradition is not a religion. The lore which I have attempted to clarify through the text, verses and diagrams which follow is compiled from the inner perceptions and modes of consciousness suggested by enduring tradition. Reasons may be found for taking such actions, and also warnings against doing so; but my personal role is definitely not that of a preacher. An effective magical tradition is not a catch-all or cure-all; it is a type of fine tool, or specialized instrument. Nor does the operation of magic, meditation or associated practices substitute for socially responsible and ethical behaviour; it can only stimulate and purify if the will to change is present.

Another way of demonstrating the difference between a

tradition and a religion is that faith is irrelevant to the operation of the tradition. At some stages of experience of an esoteric tradition, religious faith can be a powerful uplifting and protective agency; at others it is a manifest hindrance.

Following the main argument and exposition of the UnderWorld Initiation, are a number of models and practical operations. These may alter both individual and group awareness, and should be worked with repeatedly for significant results. The changes will vary from person to person, and from time to time and stage to stage within any one individual; but the methods employed, and the symbolic language spoken magically are all drawn from an enduring body of traditional lore. This corpus is the right of every man and woman; in magical terms we all create it equally. It is not, incidentally, the group or racial unconscious of modern psychology, though this poorly defined area of consciousness may be a vehicle for the more potent levels to which I refer.

The language of the prose is my own, and all faults within it are my own faults, and not necessarily those of the tradition to which I refer. To make an oral and magical teaching manifest through a literary effort is a ridiculous exercise, yet one somehow typical of our fragmentary and disconnected culture.

As all author's prefaces are really post-faces written after the main text is complete, I will give the last riddle first in good traditional style. It comes from the pen of Count Michael Maier, an influential figure in symbolic writing, research and publication, living in the seventeenth century. Maier in turn was drawing from earlier symbolists, and following the practical method of the Mysteries which are handed on through experience, rather than dogma or fashion.

In his famous work on alchemy and mythology, 'Atalanta Fugiens' (1618) Maier exhorts us to begin the Great Work or process of transmutation, with the following words: 'Latona, therefore, do thou prepare to whiten . . . and since they do harm and are of doubtful sort, *with all speed tear up the books.*' While the sentence is a translation of Maier, the italics are my own.





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# **Introduction: Freedom from Tradition**

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The value of any transcendent tradition should be found within its liberating qualities. A tradition, of any sort, has no other ultimate value. The use of tradition for tradition's sake is a perversion, a tool of suppression.

Before moving on to the esoteric tradition of catalysis which forms the main subject of our study, it is essential to consider and re-evaluate the significance and meaning of tradition itself. Without this brief re-evaluation, most of the magical information will be inert and ineffective for the average modern individual.

A genuine tradition is a mode of group instruction and interaction, a shared pattern and pool of knowledge, wisdom and behaviour. While short-term specific traditions or customs may be fabricated within closed groups and societies such as trades, military organizations or modern employment structures, enduring traditions derive from unknown sources. The growth of an enduring tradition is organic; it is humankind coping collectively with the environment. By environment we must mean both the overall entities of Land and Life, and the lesser organisms, societies and specific personal relationships which arise and decay within the overall protean and slow-moving matrix.

Popular, oral or folk traditions are the means of disseminating and acquiring the knowledge and wisdom of those who are experienced in the relationships thus embodied.

Such experience is not, however, limited to the living; it includes the group inheritance of wisdom from many people, gained over long periods of time. This is a well-known structure, familiar to both the anthropologist and folklorist, but frequently rationalized and misunderstood as being conservatism founded upon ignorance. Such continuity is easily demonstrated by the strong prevalence of curious lore within native oral traditions in the West. Pagan ritual fragments and magical songs co-exist happily with modern material, general education and popular entertainment. This ancient lore may have been part of a coherent body in the distant past, but its contemporary use forms part of the heritage of the ancestors of those who retain it within their shared memory. This memory is no mere speculative theory, but an immense repository of songs, poems, tales, music, dances, rituals, teaching and social education. Nor is it a relic of the non-literate past, for it survives in an attenuated and surprisingly transformed manner in the modern culture.

Survival of traditional lore is not due solely to direct descent, but to a complex interweaving of several factors which include both direct transmission or individual teaching, and the more subtle process of symbolic regeneration. While it is important to remember the tenacity of oral tradition, up to and beyond the period when it is fragmented by mass-media substitution, this tenacity should be seen as being reinforced. Reinforcement derives from various sources, including literacy, which was often regarded in the works of early folklore collectors as the enemy of common memory and the devourer of traditional systems of learning.

Most important is the regeneration which can occur under certain circumstances — a regeneration which combines with oral conservative traditions of song story and ritual to re-create key aspects of the environmental and ancestral lore.

True tradition is never conscious of itself; it is natural and spontaneous, with no concept of source or identity. Where such sources are claimed, they are mythical or poetical, and not historical. Even 'historical' sources in folklore are transformed into mythical potencies, and should not be

taken literally by the modern student.

The difference between an enduring tradition and a temporary custom lies in the root of the material employed. No true tradition may be fabricated through propaganda, or through a decision to 'start a tradition'. Intellect may be applied to tradition after the event manifests, but it is inadequate as an originative force for its creation. At best, an individual or group may initiate a custom by agreeing to do or say certain things at certain times in certain places. Such agreed actions may or may not become genuine traditions. If they do so, none of the originators are alive by the time this transformation has occurred, nor is the form of the communally recreated tradition identical to the original custom. This transformation takes place within a hidden but powerful vessel of shared consciousness, to which we shall return again and again when we deal with esoteric lore in our later chapters.<sup>1</sup>

Political appeals to so-called tradition play no part whatsoever in true traditional consciousness; they are blatant and juvenile attempts to override good sense and to stimulate emotional energy for political aggrandizement.

No matter how often politicians have called upon 'tradition', tradition does not call upon them in return. Before the advent of radio and television, propaganda was disseminated by word of mouth, pamphlets, printed song sheets and the pulpit. Of the thousands of political songs thrust upon the people of the past centuries (volumes of which are found in reference libraries) very few indeed were retained by oral tradition.

Yet, most paradoxically, we do find records of obscure historical or pseudo-historical events: royal deaths and weddings, sinkings of ships, certain murders, lost causes, laments and celebrations — all form a major part of the oral song and tale repertoire of the people.

While supposedly great events were forgotten, minor ones were retained for centuries through their harmonic link with magical and imaginative images which live within the broad stream of the shared consciousness.

We should not, however, underestimate the willed application of tradition combined with understanding of group manipulation. Religious movements have developed

sophisticated techniques through such knowledge, and much of this is carried over into politics, advertising and media entertainment. Amusingly, the very elements of modern entertainment which offend the orthodox Christian are the direct linear result of the Christian propaganda programme in its devolution.

A general understanding of the suppressive power potential within tradition does not liberate us, except from the superficial aspects of behaviour that form the outer shell of any actual tradition in operation. Great play is made by power-greedy theorists and acting political leaders of the concept of 'freedom'. Freedom for its own sake is as suppressive a mode of control as rigid rule. At one extreme the rigidity of an arid tradition imprisons, while at the other, the unfocused random energies of spurious freedom allow the individual to dissipate and be consumed by hidden, greater, unperceived patterns.

A tradition always has a certain esoteric content, but this is not the most obvious ancient matter susceptible to intellectual dissection. The esoteric traditions which are widely published, sold and bandied about, are mainly modern literary inventions. They arise either as a genuine response to the anti-human culture forced upon us, or as deliberate means of absorbing efforts at true liberation and thereby profiting.

To find a true esoteric tradition, therefore, is not easy — or so it would seem at first glance. Yet many of the acclaimed traditions, even the religious ones, are effective. Any esoteric tradition can be viable, provided it is possible to follow it through to its end, and providing the individual actually *does* follow it through.

The value of all tradition, particularly the energetic core, lies in its symbolic language. The language may differ with varying traditions, but all have specific modes of communication that hold the wisdom and knowledge of the ancestors in some transferable manner. When this language is developed at a deeper level of consciousness through a willed re-application of its symbols, it can flower into what is known in esoteric circles as 'mediation'.

The common interpretation of mediation is a process in which an individual acts as an interface for communication.

In the deeper aspects of an esoteric tradition, the language (in whatever symbolic form) is transformed into a condensed mode of consciousness which transcends intellect, emotions and verbal communication. In this mode a mediator is able to make many complex statements through his or her function as a focus or flow-source for the higher-order language. In mediation, the transfer of consciousness or energy is direct, not requiring the lower-order forms of speech, writing or imagery. An experienced mediator learns how to transfer the energies mediated either into a direct experience for the recipients, or into an encapsulated vehicle of imagery to re-stimulate the imagination.

In popular Eastern traditions tailored for Western customers, emphasis is placed upon the role of the guru or teacher. This rests upon his or her action as mediator and teacher. Such an important role and function is easily (often deliberately) abused, for it can lead to slavish obedience and degrading spiritual subservience. As the guru-concept is part of the true Eastern traditions, we find it manifesting in the West as one of the prime examples of misapplication of tradition under unsuitable circumstances. Many unscrupulous operators make both material and immaterial gains from prostitution of this traditional relationship between guru and chela, which in its own culture is hallowed by time and true spiritual direction.

The emphasis upon a student's inability to gain enlightenment without the aid of a teacher is closely connected to the operation of symbolic language within any given tradition. The teacher is one who has already experienced whatever the pupil seeks, has passed through the tradition, realized its fruits, and grown beyond the training framework provided by the symbolic structure. The teacher has not only the basic language and behaviour of the tradition itself, but is able to speak with, to mediate, the higher harmonics of consciousness which devolve through that same symbolic language.

The teacher is supposed to give the body of the tradition, and to breathe life into it for the pupil.

The Western tradition operates in a similar way, but with far less emphasis upon the personal human teacher. The initiate or pupil must absorb the fundamentals of the



tradition concerned, for these are the matrices through which his or her inner energies will be focused when aroused. *In the Western tradition the Teachers are usually impersonal Innerworld or metaphysical entities.* The outer body of the old lore provides the instructions required for dealing with such beings.

The interaction which results is not necessarily that which arises between human teacher and pupil, and is frequently indicated by transformative symbolism, and later by alchemical symbolism.

We may summarize the true function of tradition as follows:

1. As a containing symbolic structure or set of matrices in the expressed form of songs, stories, dances, rituals and music.
2. As an imaginative complex of images based upon the accumulated experience of all members of the tradition.
3. As a mode of interaction in which humans participate through absorption and regeneration of the matrices (1 and 2 above).
4. As a means of stimulating inner energies to flow along paths defined by the symbolic language of the tradition. These energies are, in modern terminology, both psychic and bio-electrical.

In a native tradition, inseparable from the regular cycle of life of a community, nation or race, the interaction is conditioned from birth through regular (traditional) activities and the learning of sequences of wisdom, oral lore. The Celtic culture, for example, was founded upon exactly such a system, perpetuated by the Druid cult.

In modern societies in the West, knowledge is no longer transferred as a holistic body of relationship. Conditioning to the corpus of an interrupted tradition, therefore, seems at first to be an intellectual exercise, and an artificial one. Application to the old traditions, however, produces results of surprising energy, and such results are the hallmarks of regeneration at its best. They are noticeably different from imitations or copies, as they do not have the contrived 'quaint' or 'olde' quality of which forgeries reek.

The alchemical analogy is very effective in coming to grips with true tradition, for the initiate's inner and outer energies contained within the framework of a restricting symbolic order (the tradition) are the raw materials of the Great Work, held within the alembic ready for operation.

The vessel is not the body, as is often assumed, but the matrix within which the body/psyche as a whole reacts to the environment through time.

This matrix is in the form of a tradition organically generated and preserved by the ancestors as a result of long-term relationship with the land itself.

In the present culture, the matrix is found within folklore and song, certain manuscripts from the transition period between oral and literate instruction during the Middle Ages, and the large body of mystical and metaphysical texts which relate in various ways to the old traditions. These texts include alchemical and religious works, texts on occult ritual and ceremonial magic, and inspired works of great genius such as those of Robert Fludd, Athanasius Kircher, Jacob Boehme, Rudolph Steiner and others.

Many writings, from the eighteenth century to the present day, which claim to deal with esoteric matters seem to have lost the thread of the genuine and root tradition of the West. The majority of published works which are in favour with the student of esoteric literature date from the middle of the nineteenth century, and are not connected to the native tradition, either through wilful obscurity on the part of the authors, or through their ignorance of its existence.

Historically a turning point may be established by considering whether or not a work has any intentional relationship to native oral lore. The separation developed as the old alchemical texts fell out of fashion, the corrupt magical treatises were abandoned, and a totally unfounded assumption flourished that all wisdom came from the East, and that the West had no esoteric tradition of its own.<sup>2</sup>

While this literary Waste Land was spreading its borders through the imagination of the intellectual readership, the old folklore activities persisted uninterrupted, well into the twentieth century.

In Western magic, the energies of the group and individual contained within the native tradition are activated by

known catalytic agencies. In religion, these are the objects of worship; in the East they are personified by the guru; but the West teaches that there are metaphysical beings that operate both as teachers and catalysts of consciousness.

These innerworld entities, ranging from symbolic expressions of natural forces to non-human or ex-human harmonics of awareness that live in metaphysical dimensions, interact with the human initiate. The interaction involves meshing of energies directly comparable to those of sexual intercourse, but the personal and generative motive is absent. Although an analogy has been drawn between magic and the sexual union, understanding of that analogy should not be limited to popular notions of 'sex'. The energies are exactly the same, but the motivation and interaction are very different.

During physical intercourse a wide spectrum of energy is potentially available, and is often released in a blind and uncontrolled manner. No other activity practised by human beings combines the physical, emotional and mental powers so dramatically and obviously.

In the magical operations, certain specified areas of the wide energy spectrum are concentrated upon, particularly during early training. When the controlling structure of a tradition, operating through specific symbols, is operative, it acts as a filter. Through this filter a reaction occurs in relationship to the innerworld entities encountered within the imagination, and as a result *the initiate is transformed*.

It is this knowledge that causes some esoteric traditions to discourage random sexual intercourse, or conversely, as in some pagan rites, to invoke deliberately the physical sexual act as an aspect of the god or goddess being worshipped.

These magical models of 'chastity' and 'liberation' must not be confused with so-called morality. Morality is the social and historical expression of group conditioning through long periods of time, and invariably has hidden and contradictory levels within it. Some powerful religions, such as orthodox political Christianity, create a 'morality' which is esoterically attuned to their inner Mystery.

Catholic and Protestant cults demonstrate this vicious abuse of magical knowledge and power very adequately

indeed. Yet the opposite pole of 'free love' arouses energy wastefully and dissipates it, often for the benefit of parasitic entities within the imagination and the innerworlds, not to mention parasitically obsessed humans who are dominated by their own sexual drives.

In both extremes, orthodox and libertine, the energy aroused is absorbed by metaphysical entities for the express purpose of self-perpetuation. In either case such entities are to be discouraged as illusions.

Such exchanges, however, need not be on the level of survival or co-operation. The Western tradition employs natural laws, which are said to be inherent in the energy exchanges between realms or worlds of magic. Less emphasis is placed upon the teacher-pupil relationship, or the religious orgy versus chastity, and fewer convolutions arise as a result.

None of this natural energy flow works without containment, without tuning and direction. The tuning is found within the symbolic language of the tradition employed. The hidden wisdom of an environmental tradition, expressed outwardly as song, story or ritual, relates to the entire energy chain from physical cells to originative levels which are not admitted into materialist world-views. This chain, this holistic and harmonic entity of individual and collective man and woman, has a potential far beyond that of the customary random expression of daily life. The habitual expressions are the shape of the physical body, as well as the seeming personality which is far more fluid than we are falsely led to believe, and astrologically expressed flow patterns derived from the position in the environment at birth. We shall be returning to these elements in later chapters in detail.

The esoteric traditions re-activate and often reshape many of the paths referred to above, and if the conditioning is effective, the energies come alive in dynamic ways; the human contains the experiences and cellular learning of many ancestors, merged with the imaginative inheritance of the racial past. While such statements may seem superficially similar to those of certain schools of genetics and psychology, the magical and metaphysical foundations of the traditional teachings on this subject are very different from the modern materialist premises.

The most useful models, which offer guiding principles and insights into the innerworld relationships, are those with relatively neutral symbolic structures. Such models include but transcend basic racial traditions, enabling the operation to be fully opened out without stereotypical imbalance or inhibition. The Tree of Life, and other geometric models and conceptual maps must be combined with the traditional images and ritual patterns for maximum realization of potential.

As the Tree of Life is the victim of some quite bizarre and dogmatic speculations in modern esoteric literature, a separate chapter (Chapter 8) has been devoted to this subject.

Another useful analogy is that of the ancient geomantic sciences, which are attracting new interest in the wake of the general disillusionment with technology. The traditional teaching is that the wild forces of earth, springs, landscapes and hills are shaped by the use of special constructs such as standing stones, earthworks, wells and other conducting and polarizing units. This is a conceptual model that repeats itself many times in magical terminology, whereby natural energy is regulated and amplified from its spiral and curving paths into higher orders of shape. This is not a mere fantasy, for it is the basis of all materialist science and physics, and is inherent in the planet, the solar system, and the individual human body and psychic unity.

In magic, and more specifically in the esoteric traditions, including the UnderWorld Initiation which is our main subject, the laws of shape and energy exchange are applied for arousal, amplification and control of the powers latent within the human being. Such powers are harmonics or localized expressions of a greater, permeating, Power — the Power that causes all existence to manifest originally.

Freedom is not achieved by turning our backs upon the heritage of the land, nor is it won by force of arms. The restricting vessels of a true tradition are the way to freedom, but only if they are correctly understood and utilized. If this operation is successful, the restricting power itself is not only transcended, but transformed.<sup>3</sup>

**Part One:**  
**The Theory and**  
**Practice of the**  
**UnderWorld Initiation**



# 1.

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## **The Hidden Tradition**

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Throughout this exploration of esoteric tradition, we shall be demonstrating two premises. The first is that there is a coherent body of lore within certain old songs and ballads which exemplifies an essential part of the Western Mysteries. The second is that this lore provides working keys to a magical experience known as the Otherworld Journey, or UnderWorld Initiation, from which our title is derived.

Our second premise is the basis of an important experience linked to the group-soul, involving the mysterious relationship between the human life-spirit and the environment, particularly the land of birth. Out of this experience comes individual liberation, achieved through a refining process in which successive stages of imbalance and limitation are transformed by interaction with symbols, often in the form of beings who inhabit the UnderWorld. This liberation is substantially different from the integration or realization offered by modern psychology; the process contains many elements unknown and inaccessible to any school of modern psychotherapy. It also transcends, or as we shall later discover, runs far beneath, the area commonly known as the 'racial subconscious' or 'unconscious symbolism', and is not to be thought of as an exclusively racial property.



### **Magic and Psychology**

As our second premise is fraught with the influence of rapidly changing vocabulary in modern literature, it is worth examining both the UnderWorld Journey of tradition, and apparently similar concepts that appear in modern psychology and psychotherapy.

The UnderWorld Initiation or Journey should not be confused with, or by, the current trends, jargon and theories of psychology. It is a major life experience in its own right, an inner reality with a long and well-defined background of both theory and practice, established and effectively operating long before the advent of modern psychology.

The psychological expositions of 'the inner journey' or the 'unconscious' are flat reflections of a multi-dimensional pattern of relationship between life-energies. Modern therapies that offer 'experiential' dynamics or journeys do not touch upon more than one facet of this reality — that of the initial reflection of the UnderWorld upon the mental and emotional personality structure of the individual.

It is most important to grasp this difference between psychology and the inner or hidden traditions from the outset. In recent years, many writers attempting to deal with esoteric subjects have tried, and usually failed, to justify themselves in the light of psychology. Astrologers in particular have paid a great deal of lip-service to schools of thought derived from the work of C. G. Jung, somehow forgetting that Jung resorted to astrology to clarify his psychological interpretations, and not vice versa.

Jung, who was widely read in the works of the ancients, misappropriated and altered the meanings of many terms used regularly in magic and metaphysics; and this perverted vocabulary has crept insidiously into modern apologies for the ancient Arts. The classic example of this misuse, which has caused much confusion, is Jung's alteration of the meaning of the term 'Archetype'; but the overall effect is achieved by an almost frivolous use of concepts derived from alchemy and mysticism, mangled together until their original and established meanings are thoroughly bludgeoned, and new or even contradictory meanings are arbitrarily assigned to them in therapeutic practice.

We often find Jung making such outrageous statements,

that it seems impossible that a man of his intelligence and perception could publish them without really knowing better.<sup>1</sup> Within a generation, a vast field of derivative literature has appeared in which Jung's alterations and frivolous assertions are closely followed, as if none of the subsequent authors had ever consulted a simple dictionary. The modern occultists and astrologers, lamenting their fate as the monstrous child has outgrown them and cast them from the nest, have also adopted terminology that seems designed to confuse rather than to clarify the paths to increased awareness.

The criticisms, however, are not presuming to question the use of psychology in modern therapeutic techniques, nor to question or even discuss their effectiveness within our society. Time and social change will prove or disprove such effectiveness, and psychology is challenged here only in as far as it presumes to supplant or distort the ancient understanding and scientific arts that relate to human consciousness.

If we seek for the real and essential difference between magic and psychology, it is not a matter of words, terms or methods, for these are bound to bear certain relationships by the very nature of the human psyche which is the subject of both schools of thought. But all magic, and especially the hidden traditions that wait behind the facade of magical practices, is firmly based upon this Foundation: *There is more than one World.*

This is a literal statement, and was never intended as a simplified way of explaining the unconscious mind or the racial archetypes to the simple-minded or to the sceptic. For this one reason alone, modern psychology should be recognized as a very different study to that of magic, for psychology does not allow this major metaphysical premise to be true.

As a result of this severe limitation, for psychology is the love-child of materialism and orthodox religion, the transformational journey offered by some schools of psychotherapy only touches upon a superficial reflection of the UnderWorld within the brain of the self-imprisoned and isolated individual. It does not break through into that more potent UnderWorld which is the Archetype (in the

true sense of the word) from which all innerworlds are projected.

The explanatory role assumed by psychology in general tends to emasculate magical terminology and practical efficacy. An intellectual interpretation of a symbol is by no means identical to experiencing the energy embodied by that symbol, particularly when the interpretation involves offhand alterations of basic meaning in respect of relevant words that should describe the subject matter accurately.

If we express the same statement poetically, we might say that there are worlds of difference between citing the nature of so-called racial archetypes, and experiencing the terror and power of these 'symbolic entities' in an energized magical circle.

The 'archetype' frequently referred to in psychology is the construct of each individual, reflected from conditioned experience, and occasionally grounded in a form shared by a larger group. A magical image, by way of contrast, may or may not have similar attributes to any specific psychological archetype, but is a carefully shaped and energized structure which persists in the innerworlds or shared imagination for immense periods of time. Both of these images draw upon true Archetypes, which are rooted in the foundations of all worlds, or partake of the true nature of the Universe.

The Other Worlds of the magical conceptions are, like our human world, occupied by a multitude of different creatures. A genuine and effective UnderWorld Initiation involves meeting and interacting with these beings. They are *not symbolic*, but are real within their own worlds. Some may have been humans, according to tradition, while others have never been human in any way or at any time.

Psychology treats such beings as delusions, whereas magic regards both humans and Others as temporary aspects of one Life Power, all subject to change, metamorphosis or transformation.

Magic is intimately involved with the environment — not as a social or ethical concept of preservation, but as a living entity in which the human plays a special role. There is no concept of moral responsibility, or even of utilitarian common sense, but there is the knowledge that we are able

to mediate and transform energies in association with the land and the planet. This premise of unity between humankind and the land, particularly with regard to ills that are caused through disharmony of the relationship, is not admitted into modern psychology, even though it was central to the psychology of the ancients from which much of the modern profession is copied without acknowledgement.

Psychology tends to avoid the subject of God or gods and goddesses, treating God as an outmoded belief, and the gods and goddesses as mere emblems of natural forces or of individual energies within the psyche. Magical practice, however, admits that these images have a powerful reality of their own, using them as means of reaching out towards truth, but not treating them as absolute ends.

The supporter of the traditional and magical systems of metapsychology will often seem to be suggesting that the Art is broad while psychology is narrow, yet this is not the case. Any practising esoteric student will admit that the magical way is very narrow indeed, and that it is these very same liberal-minded and vaguely unified notions that weaken the transformative powers. The narrow way, however, is used as a means of gaining thrust, and not as a type of imprisonment; the tradition and the strict application of symbols, ritual and meditation are the fingers that squeeze the apple pip, causing it to fly.

In the final argument, we come not to belief, but to experience. Magical traditions offer actual experience in support of their reality, with the proviso that, like any other art, effort and discipline are essential. If magic is to have a genuine revival, untainted by fictitious nonsense or the haggard shadows of orthodox religious jealousy and oppression, it should not be confused with the modern occupations of mental therapy, or with the broader social equations that are being derived from psychological research. The magical traditions do, in fact, have effective sets of social equations, usually expressed as topological models. We can see how one such formula was applied by the orthodox Church, with considerable material and political success, at the expense of spiritual freedom or enlightenment. Other social formulae, which are actually

magical formulae, all gravitate towards a pseudo-religious expression; and if a country or small group dares to maintain or apply an archaic social-magical structure, it is often destroyed. The most striking example of this is the invasion of Tibet by Communist China.

Because of the depth and variety of material available through an UnderWorld Initiation, groups and schools that offer a psychological or therapeutic experience for financial gain should be shunned.

From a magical viewpoint, the 'transformational journey' currently fashionable is closely allied to the nineteenth-century concept of the 'unconscious'; but in esoteric tradition there is no such thing as unconsciousness or subconsciousness. The areas dealt with in modern psychology are images projected upon the individual awareness, deriving from potent realities which have their root in other worlds. It is as if years of study, writing and treatment have been expended in touring repeatedly around an image in the surface of a lens; yet the reality in all its power is only a small distance away, accessible through one brave leap.

The reality of the UnderWorld is clearly indicated by the rays of light radiating from their original source, and whereas the mental therapists crawl around the image upon the lens (the human psyche in its personality phases), magic and the enduring traditions follow the projected light to its source.

This source is in the innerworlds, and particularly that innerworld which is closely attuned to the individual's outer environment at the time of birth. This is quite different to the 'racial unconscious' and whereas astrology can successfully guide psychology, psychology cannot explain or rationalize astrology. Our analogy of light and images is similar to the language of mysticism, either Eastern or Western, but the light is not in Heaven or Paradise. In the Western esoteric traditions, the light is deep within the UnderWorld, radiating from a Vessel which is the Archetype of the Holy Grail.

### **UnderWorld, Otherworld and Innerworlds**

The Journey beyond this first reflection, the personal psyche,

is the beginning, but it is not an end in itself. The UnderWorld or Otherworld and the interlinked dimensions accessible to the imaginative traveller are not to be traversed as tourists; they are to be *passed beyond*. This is why so much magical lore consists of dull tables of unlikely correspondences, or complex hierarchies of metaphysical beings; these lists are intended as crude maps, upon which each student should make his or her own improvements by direct experience.

There is often confusion over the 'UnderWorld', 'Otherworld' and 'Innerworlds', and as these are important terms of reference for the student of metaphysics, we should make a definition of the relationships between them.

In any esoteric tradition, there are found to be innumerable 'worlds'. These are frequently called innerworlds, in modern occult textbooks, which is a rather unfortunate term, implying that they exist only within the whimsy of the individual. Such worlds, however, have a strong coherent life and structure of their own, though this varies considerably, and may only be tested by experience and comparison.

If we take Innerworlds to mean worlds which are reached by a *mutual* reversal of attention, worlds which are accessible through altering the customary outward-looking attitude that leads our perception into accustomed grooves, then the term becomes useful.<sup>2</sup>

Many Innerworlds are intentional structures built through group visualization, linked to specific life-energies. They are given their stability not only by the beings that occupy them, but by the active co-operation of humans. Obvious though crude examples are religious 'Paradises' or 'Hells', yet there are Innerworlds of far greater complexity and of more sophisticated construction. Heaven and Hell are increasingly regarded as psychic states or conditions, one of the more positive benefits of modern psychology. Yet the Innerworlds exist independently of the psychic state of any individual, despite the fact that certain states admit or debar us from certain worlds.

Some Innerworlds, often difficult to enter, are quite alien to the human consciousness, and the degrees of relationship are often featured in old tales and chronicles which described

Journeys or abductions into and out of the Worlds.<sup>3</sup> Most of the Innerworlds that we can enter are reflections of patterns that appear, or have appeared, or will appear, in our outer world. Some act as matrices for creative energies which mould the generation of the outer world, both social and environmental. As we shall discover in our later chapters, this knowledge features considerably in the initiations of the old enduring Traditions.

Amid this bewildering panoply of images, worlds, beings, ways and traditions, what does the individual seek? For each person, or for each group of persons related spiritually, there is only one UnderWorld in which the transformative Initiation will be successful.

This one UnderWorld is the central strand around which the gates to all other worlds are woven in specific patterns. The primary rule in practical application of magic is that *the UnderWorld is that Innerworld which is closely attuned to the land of your physical birth.*

Along the path to this world, there are gates to be entered, and beings to be encountered. The host of legends, ballads and fairy tales gives many insights into this tradition of encounter and transformation, and we shall be looking at specific examples in detail, not as entertaining old nonsense, but as indicators of very real imaginative catalytic experience.

The Traveller eventually emerges on the Other Side, having passed through the UnderWorld to a completely new state of understanding that operates through the physical body. Certain events confer knowledge, which permanently changes the Traveller's outlook upon the everyday world; more important is the fact that his or her entire entity is changed, re-polarized, and that this change may be communicated to others through mediation. The Initiation is not evangelical, however, and there is no urge to convert, preach or persuade others to take the same journey. Once again, we touch upon the essential difference between the old traditions and group religion; the traditions are dependent at their deepest levels upon individual responsibility, while religions of both East and West rely upon the abrogation of that responsibility into the group mind. This group mind is the source of magical power that

creates the InnerWorld Paradises and Hells. The same laws applied to the pagan religions, particularly in their public context, but these were known to contain deeper levels of initiation (the Mysteries) in which the candidate stood alone.

The environmental relationship between the UnderWorld and the candidate's land of birth is expressed by the charts drawn up in astrological studies. Although this is commonly assumed to be a property of 'the stars', the esoteric teaching upon this subject is different from that of stellar influence, and different again from the modern pseudo-psychological standpoint that the star positions in a chart are merely synchronous with psychic potentials in the newly born individual. If we go deep enough into the UnderWorld, we emerge among the Stars.

There are exceptions, also, to the law of environmental and Innerworld relationship. As we shall see in a later chapter, much of UnderWorld experience is influenced by an apparent contact with the Traveller's ancestors. If these ancestors are from a radically different environment to that of the candidate's physical birth, a choice is presented. The choice is not a matter of race, but one of Paths. To a certain extent, the Ancestors represent the individual and collective past, whereas the point-of-environment holds the present and the future within its heart. Ideally, these must be merged as one.

It may be obvious from the above why we can be entrapped in religions or philosophies which are alien and even poisonous to our inner nature. In such a case, the power of an Innerworld has projected itself upon the psyche to the exclusion of his or her true Archetypical world. This projection and imposition can be mild or extreme, causing people to wear foreign national costume, use words of languages which they do not speak, and attempt to live according to the social customs of other lands. If this is seen as an attack upon the Eastern schools which thrive in the Western World, we should point out that similar psychic impositions are common among Western occultists, particularly those who practise Hebrew Qabalah.

One obvious reason for the flood of Eastern cults into the willing West is that such impositions are readily accepted in the absence of genuine keys to the Innerworlds. Genuine



esoteric traditions are environmental in all but their most advanced stages, and by this simple rule the false is easily distinguished from the true. No school that takes money for its teaching or initiation is considered valid, as money cannot buy the esoteric gifts; nor can a teacher or guide choose to sell his or her understanding willy-nilly.

No real Eastern school or guru would consider initiating a candidate on a monetary basis, nor would any member of the Western Mysteries. In the East, where the power of the Land has always been understood and beloved, there is no great gap between the primal traditions and the hidden wisdom, and it is this gap, this rift, that unscrupulous fake 'gurus' seek to profit from in the West.

But there is a way of bridging that gap, and the methods are contained within the Western traditions which have never disappeared or been fully suppressed. One of the hallmarks of true magic is that it is freely available to all, yet very few of us choose to look for it. The Western tradition has survived many centuries of bloody persecution, subtle manipulation, and it still exists today in the most unlikely places.

In alchemy, the Philosopher's Stone, the Key of Transmutation, was in the commonest earth, yet none could find it. Count Michael Maier, possibly drawing upon the old teaching that wisdom is found among the songs and tales of the ordinary people and not in grand temples, advises us to ask guidance of 'the Woman who washes clothes'. This accompanies a pictorial emblem (*Atalanta Fugiens*, 1618) in which the physical and chemical actions of repeated washing, pounding and rinsing are likened to inner transformative operations, or to the generation of the Stone. One of the most significant goddess images of the Western tradition, derived from Celtic mythology, is that of a Woman washing a White Stone in a deep running river.<sup>4</sup>

It is through Keys of this sort, and not those of formal religion or occult lodge ritual, that we shall open the Pathway to the UnderWorld.

## 2.

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# **The Secret Way across the Abyss**

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During our analysis of a group of traditional songs and related lore which reveal an enduring magical tradition, we will encounter many subjects quite alien to the academic area set by scholars as the limit for folklore study. No attempt will be made to follow the usual stricture of folksong analysis, as this has been done effectively by a number of fine scholars. The significance suggested for a small body of songs and tales does not imply general rules; there is no implication that all folksong and folklore, poetry or music, is part of any full-blown esoteric movement.

We will employ a small group that is scattered within an immense protean body of oral lore, and it is not at all certain that the initiatory elements were deliberately placed therein for preservation or circulation. What is likely is that the lore of magic is present because it is in its true home, the root expression of the relationship between the land and the people.

### **The Folk Tradition**

Application to folklore material does not imply rural quaintness and escapism, and these are attitudes which play no part in magical initiation. Some of the most potent magical ballads have been found in the oral repertoire of city dwellers living close to the heart of twentieth-century industry; the author has had magical lore offered from tradition by people

living in thoroughly modern circumstances, and with no intellectual interest in esoteric matters whatsoever.<sup>1</sup> Such people merely sing or tell of what they know, what they learned from their elders, and what has always been known. Despite this currency of oral tradition, the number of families who retain such material grows smaller and smaller; the group memory is heavily assaulted by state-education and mass-media, both of which supplant and enervate traditional group imagery and communication.

The value of our chosen group of song examples, which is not intended to be complete or authoritative, but merely exemplary, rests in their anonymous transmission and preservation. Even those ballads noted down in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which mention historical persons from earlier ages (such as Thomas the Rhymer, or King Henry II) were preserved through an oral and primarily non-literate tradition. It is in this respect that they are invaluable as effective magical vessels: they are the visual keys of the accumulated group imagination attuned to the land itself.

References within songs such as those mentioned above, and examined in detail in our later chapters, become transformed when they are considered as esoteric lore. The dreamlike semi-historical ambience is relit with an illumination from the Innerworlds, and the characters come alive within our imagination. Many such characters have passed from human life, in which they were provable historical persons, into the UnderWorld; though not all in the same manner, and not all to the same Innerworld.

Some individuals, such as the famous Thomas Rhymer,<sup>2</sup> are said to have passed into the Innerworlds while still in the physical body. Others, such as Henry II and his mistress Fair Rosamund, clearly died, were buried, yet lived on in the common memory as mythical figures.<sup>3</sup>

By myth we mean *a story which exemplifies interaction between nature and the power of human consciousness.*

There is a clear distinction within tradition between humans who have become myth-attuned, mythical beings who were never human, and humans who have been transformed yet retain their humanity. An example of the first group has already been given (Henry and Rosamund),

while the second consists of a large number of characters from balladry; the Fairy Queen; the Langkin; the Daemon Lover and many more. The third group includes Thomas Rhymer, who actually lived, and others such as Tam Lin, who probably had no historical identity, yet strongly insists on his own humanity in every version of his ballad.<sup>4</sup>

It may be significant to esoteric Christians that the character of Jesus fulfils each of these three categories:

1. A human who has become attuned to myth, in his role as sacrificial king;
2. a mythical being who was not human: in his presence as an incarnation of the divine spirit through virgin birth;
3. a human who has been transformed yet retains humanity: as the resurrected one who returns from the UnderWorld and from death, yet retains a transmuted human body that is physically accessible to his followers.

The remarkable tenacity and accuracy of oral traditions has been dealt with in a number of specialist studies, so it must be sufficient to state briefly the following. Folksong is anonymous. It is transmitted by word of mouth, retained by non-literate memory, even though literacy does not exclude a bearer of tradition from being viable and active in such preservation. Folksong is regenerated at a mythical level of consciousness, by dreamlike processes which link people, their ancestors and their native land. This is why folksong and music of any specific region is so distinctive, and actually why most modern commercial music and song is not.

### **The Magical Dream**

As the word 'dreamlike' has appeared in our definition of folksong, it is worth examining the difference between the dream process of the hidden traditions, and ordinary dreaming. There is a distinction which must be understood before relating to esoteric transformative systems.

A simple way of summarizing this very complex subject might be to suggest that whereas all dreams reflect a certain amount of magical material, most dreams are trivial and

valueless to the initiate. They are the discarded matter of awareness, being eliminated through random interaction while asleep. This traditional teaching will seem heretical to certain schools of psychoanalysis.

At later stages of initiation, dreaming becomes very highly attuned and pertinent to magical and meditational themes, but for our present purposes we can set this stage aside for future experience.

Certain dreams, which are identified by their content and their feeling of illumination or highlighted quality of meaning, are magical in nature. These are rare occurrences in most of us, but in a large group of loosely related individuals there is a general process similar to the magical dream which creates and preserves a body of symbolic lore. This lore is expressed as songs, stories, music or poetry, occasionally as ceremony or craftsmanship of a specific nature and style. The relationship is not exclusively that of the family, tribe or nation, but tends to express itself through such groups.

The magical dream was often used as a  $\uparrow$  hallmark in education or initiation. An aspirant soon discovers that magic cannot be grasped by intellectual effort, that he or she can only learn lists of contents by this means. When the intellect is lit by the higher modes of consciousness, however, it can grow into a suitable vehicle for translation and communication. Such a state is usually preceded by magical dreams. When the student dreams of material that is part of the tradition, but has not been available for study, the teacher is aware that the seed has taken root. This ideal situation is not easy to achieve in modern culture, and in the Western tradition there are very few human teachers who can explain the stages as they are achieved.

Fortunately, the traditional systems of interaction with Innerworld beings are effective without intellectual tuition, though even this does arise once the initiate has developed some skill in inner conversation.

The spontaneous magical dream is later replaced by waking or imaginative vision during disciplined states of consciousness, or meditation; but magical dreams continue to occur during sleep.

The waking visualization is in turn superseded by

prophetic insight, sometimes known as 'occult seership' to distinguish it from ordinary clairvoyance. This third stage is one of the results of the UnderWorld Initiation. Each stage supersedes the preceding dream-process, but does not cancel it out entirely. The third mode of Seership should not be confused with spiritism, clairvoyance, or even with telepathy; and although the Celtic 'Second Sight' is related to our third mode, it is a lesser harmonic of it, arising spontaneously during waking moments.<sup>5</sup>

The ancients employed dream therapy, but in a manner very different from that practised today. Rather than attempt to label and explain the contents and direction of dreams, the older systems sought to induce specific dreams and generate key symbols within the awareness of the patient. Such dreams manifest in different ways according to the psychic condition of the subject, and may then be interpreted according to the behaviour of the characters in the dream. Often the dream itself is a complete therapy, suggesting courses of action to the therapist (priest or priestess), particularly in the case of mental/emotional imbalance. Otherwise, the very act of dreaming according to attuned consciousness is curative, and the pagan temples included facilities for undergoing the Sleep of the Gods. In certain methods of dream therapy, the dreaming was not done by the 'patient', but by the 'doctor', who learned symbolic indications of the relevant problem, and so established a means to cure the imbalance, offer advice, or take essential action.

In recent years, a great deal of popular attention has been drawn to the use of hallucinatory drugs that may or may not have been central to the ancient Mysteries. This is merely another way of detracting, of rationalizing the insight of the Ancestors and explaining it all as drug-induced illusion. When we consider the lavish use of tranquillizers, stimulants, depressants and electro-convulsive therapy within our own culture, upon a scale utterly unprecedented (and quite unnecessary) by comparison with previous societies, the suggested use of drugs by the ancients seems trivial indeed.

Most of the inner teachings of the Western tradition do not involve the use of drugs of any sort, even socially

acceptable substances such as alcohol or tobacco. The most advanced stages of the UnderWorld Initiation require very subtle changes within the bloodstream, changes which would be impossible under the influence of chemical agents, at least until the initiate was very familiar with this aspect of magical work. We will return to these changes in a later section, where the experience of the 'Arousal of the Blood' is discussed.

Esoteric schools also use the dream state for basic education. As magic postulates a creation of many worlds, it also enables the student to learn from beings that exist within the Innerworlds. Much of this learning may be done during sleep. When the old writers make statements such as 'an Angel visited me while I slept' or 'the Dark Queen told me of this in a dream . . .', they are *not* poetically or ignorantly referring to unconscious or suppressed material breaking through into their awareness during the night; neither can this be explained in terms of a limited technical vocabulary, nor by way of allegory for the ignorant. Indeed, any unprejudiced study of the technical vocabulary of magic, metaphysics or alchemy soon establishes that there was no lack of terminology, and no shortage of experts able to employ it. Much like the jargon of modern science, physics or psychology, the real problem lies in the excess of technical vocabulary, not in its limitations or shortage of words.

To the practical magician such visitations are natural, but not in a superstitious or fearful manner as popularized by pulp fiction. Old magical and metaphysical works teem with different orders of being who might enter the Circle of Art, or communicate via dreams. It seems almost unnecessary to mention that many scientific discoveries have been made in this way, as well as many famous works of art, music or literature.<sup>6</sup>

It would be ridiculous to suggest that all such material comes from otherworld sources, but the magical traditions assert that *some of it* does. The practical magician is not a credulous or naive person; he or she merely accepts a different set of standards to those assumed by the materialist. Any experienced occultist will agree that magicians are, in fact, more sceptical than physicists, and far more averse to meddling with the psyche than are psychologists and psychiatrists.

The magical tradition, therefore, does not suggest that our learning process is merely divided between the materialist roles such as experience, observation and experiment, and direct instruction from beings in other dimensions.

The magical viewpoint considers instinct and genetics to be the group product of the experience of the Ancestors in the historical past. This leads to the realization that the old dispute between the interplay of genetics and environment, or behavioural conditioning and innate response, is quite irrelevant. In the UnderWorld, the Ancestors and the Land are At One. The dichotomy is a matter of human perception, which is self-limited by various sets of barriers. Each of these barriers may be broken down by the experience of the UnderWorld; some people find that the liberation progresses by stages, while others experience the dissolution of groups of barriers in rapid succession. There is no promise of a kindly teacher or Paradise for reward; once we have set foot upon the UnderWorld path, or eaten of the fruit offered in that realm, we leave such trivia behind.

For there is a state of perception, of awareness, which is more important by far than pleasant visions or education by Innerworld contacts. It is a state in which we are enabled to gain direct knowledge of hidden realities. This ability emerges from our innermost nature, the heart of our being, our centre that is normally ignored or feared. In traditional magical or mystical vocabulary, this awareness is often called 'the mediation of the Knower Within'. A visual key to this is shown on the Tree of Life, an emblem which is by no means confined to Jewish or Near-Eastern Qabalah.

One of the most interesting aspects of the magical dream is that it may be triggered by the minimum of information or stimulus, not in response to emotional problems, long-smothered imbalance, or through professional guidance.

To return to our examples drawn from folksong, we may say that the dreamlike flow of a tradition is utterly impersonal. It is maintained by its key quality, its symbolic wholeness, and not through personal identification or continuation of emotional or other psychic imbalance.

This broad dreaming is expressed with understanding within the songs themselves; when ballad characters dream, they follow clear and recognizable patterns. These include



the communicative dream, in which knowledge of a situation, such as the loss of a lover or the sinking of a ship is gleaned from afar, and the prophetic environmental dream in which a woman or a totem animal appears as representative of the Land.<sup>7</sup>

These last two types of character appear initially to the dreamer, or to the impersonal narrator of the song, then act as psychopomps for the subsequent action. In Irish poetry, the appearance of the Woman of the Land is a convention found in both artistic and oral verses.

Magical symbolism and pagan or proto-Christian material appears in dreams that arise within ballad or song plots and in oral tales; it is significant that dreams within ballads often contain powerful primal imagery which may be linked to early cultural myth.

Such dreams, ah such dreams as I had last night,  
These dreams they do bode a man no good,  
I dreamed that my hall was all filled with wild swine,  
And the walls were a-running with blood.

In this ballad example ('Lady Margaret and Sweet William'), the dream of wild swine and blood is an indication that the hero's lover has committed suicide; but the symbolism is not merely dramatic, for the swine are the Celtic UnderWorld totem animals, the creatures of the Dark Goddess of death and life. Furthermore, when we hear the entire song, we discover that Sweet William has been visited by his lover's phantom prior to the revelatory dream, and that he has thought her still alive and well, even to the extent of making love to her while his wife sleeps unsuspecting!<sup>8</sup>

We may choose to take such complex magical sequences as evidence of deep-rooted maladaptive urges, or we may follow the esoteric psychology which suggests that these bizarre images are in fact catalytic keys to new orders of awareness. As the storehouse of such images is found in the collective imagination, it forms an educational or initiatory substratum to oral tradition, which may be activated at will. We are familiar with fashionable paradoxes and shocking statements from the Zen Buddhist school of Japan, yet fail to detect similar sophisticated catalysts within our own native lore.

## **Mediation and the UnderWorld Journey**

In the broadest sense, the folk memory retains that which is essential to the land, and reproduces it as required. This does not imply the land as an agricultural source of food and wealth, but as a holistic flow of energies which manifest through all living creatures, through the earth and plants, and through the mineral bones of the planet itself.

According to the most ancient traditions, humankind occupies a special place as mediator of specific powers; the land is in our care, as are the creatures that live upon it, the plants that grow from its surface, and the metals and crystals waiting within its heart. Oral lore reflects this mediation repeatedly, and so includes variants of pagan and early Christian beliefs and practices.

The small group of songs that are studied in our following chapters, and which are added to the main text in an appendix, contain magical Keys. These Keys open Gates that lead into specific Mysteries, particularly those of the Tree of Transformation, and the UnderWorld Journey.

To illustrate this, we need only turn to the Arthurian legends or the Christian Middle Ages; the root power that animates these complex tales is present in modern songs and stories from active oral tradition. This comparable material is not derived from centuries of Arthurian literature, but from a continuing non-literary tradition that abides with each generation, leading us back to the prime elements from which the Arthurian lore was assembled.

Some of the problems of Arthurian material such as the Lancelot/Grail cycle and other manuscript sources too well known to need further enumeration here, may be only fully understood in the light of certain folk tales, songs and rituals. Significantly, oral tradition no longer mentions 'Arthur' or 'the Grail', despite the early Welsh stories such as the *Mabinogion*, which were taken from oral tradition by early chroniclers or monastics.<sup>9</sup>

If the oral tradition contained such stories, as is suggested by scholars, they have been polished by the collective imagination, and reduced to hard basic elements, the same elements from which they emerged in time long past and forgotten by formal history.

In our selection of ballads and songs, the stark primal quality is paramount.

It is sufficient for the present to suggest that the essence of Arthurian lore is found in a very small number of folk songs that remained in the oral tradition, but which are not found in the medieval sources.

Folk tradition was unaffected by widespread literary influences, and remained so into the twentieth century. It may be used to revitalize the Western Mysteries and the Matter of Britain in very dynamic ways.

The presence of 'folk' themes or traditional symbolism is not by any means unique to the medieval expositions of ancient lore. Homer's *Odyssey* is nothing more nor less than a standard group of magical ballads, fleshed out with linking sections and descriptive elements which we take to be the work of one particular bard. It does not take much effort to identify themes in Homer which were widespread in European and Asian balladry, long after Homer had been lost and forgotten. Such themes were current in the West among people who had never heard of Homer or of the classical revival, and who lived a rich imaginative life with a full repertoire of tales and songs, while being unable to read and write words or music.

At least three of the major themes of the *Odyssey* were collected in British ballad or song form during the early years of the twentieth century, but this does not imply that they were derived from the Homeric translations. Homer's work was based upon primal themes that regenerated within the Mediterranean and European imagination for thousands of years — based, in fact, upon magical imagery.<sup>10</sup>

If material from the basic oral sources is applied in conjunction with the practice of magic, each aspect of our Western heritage is enlivened. Application in this manner has been ignored or suppressed for a long period of time; while Eastern esoteric schools make full use of folklore, and do not separate the traditions of ordinary people from the most arcane systems of meditation. In the West, the ridiculous emphasis upon intellectual justification of magic has tended towards the exclusion of oral material, particularly in the wider literary context. This exclusion is prominent in the groups and orders that claim to teach and initiate the student, yet most of these have an exclusively

literary background that can be traced no further than the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, we have the 'witchcraft' movement, which has quite rightly spent much of its energy and time with folk source material. Yet we are forced to admit that this too is a very modern and intellectual revival and fabrication, which appeared during the first seventy years of the twentieth century, particularly as a fashionable response to the repeal of the Witchcraft Act.<sup>12</sup>

The folklorist or anthropologist frequently has to remind self-acclaimed witches that the people who sang folksongs, and who still practise folk rituals were not, generally, practitioners of the old craft as a self-identifying cult. They were, and are, more likely to be practising Christians, with a foundation of the old lore derived from ancestral sources. In the folk memory there is no theoretical conflict between old and new religions; some of Britain's longest-lived pagan ceremonies are faithfully carried out by church or chapel worshippers, and, magically, these ceremonies still work.

This regeneration of pagan tradition within an ostensibly Christian culture is not the work of 'hidden masters' or 'the old religion'. Each of these false labels is a fabrication, either by individuals who seek money and power by sensationalism, or more subtly and dangerously by Christian propagandists. There is an increasing suspicion among students of religious and esoteric history that the conflict between Christian and pagan in Britain, which we all accepted as a historical fact at school, was a far more complex and enduring relationship than is usually imagined. We still find the people of Cornwall, or parts of Scotland, involved in pagan death and resurrection rites, or fire ceremonies, with a religious background of Methodism or Presbyterianism. In Ireland the Catholic Church has not succeeded in discouraging local deities, albeit disguised as saints, while in the United States most of the magical ballads were collected from members of very strict chapel cults. None of these ordinary people would presume to think that they were 'witches' or 'pagans', and would either laugh or be outraged at any such well-meaning suggestion. Yet they perpetuate the Ancient Mysteries in a living form, as a natural and organic expression from their deepest consciousness.<sup>13</sup>

Much of the early zealotry of the Roman Church was aimed at destroying other Christian cults, and within the oral lore, we shall find that a primal Christian element exists, something which grew from the roots of the UnderWorld Tree, but was deliberately cut down by the orthodox Church at an early date. Folk memory has retained some elements of this proto-Christian symbolism, and the heretical aspects of the Grail manuscripts were intended as a bridge between the widespread oral traditions, and the formal religion of the ruling minorities in medieval society. The Grail manuscripts were anonymous, following the anonymity of the sources upon which they drew; they avoid persecution and suppression not only through their anonymity, but through their surprising currency and popularity. Our earliest 'literary' masterpieces are derived directly from verbal magical traditions, so it is no wonder that they developed into a major theme of European and American literature, a theme which has endured beyond the orthodox religion which had no place for the Grail.

Not being the property of any cult, old or new, the symbolic language and imagery of native tradition was open for all to hear and see equally. The manuscript collections were either used as courtly entertainment, or ridiculed as being of little true historical value.

The twelfth-century historian Geoffrey of Monmouth brought the literary traditions of both Arthur and Merlin into being, drawing from oral sources known in the Welsh or Breton regions. His works, such as *The History of the British Kings*, were mocked even by his contemporaries, such as Gerald of Wales (Gerald du Barry), and the fashion of ridiculing Geoffrey has remained to the present day. Esoterically, we should regard Geoffrey's work as a storehouse of magical symbolism, a compendium of traditional initiatory instruction. Materially, it is seen as a credulous amalgam of silly old tales and fake history, assembled in elegant Latin for courtly patrons.

As with Geoffrey, so with the anonymous Lancelot/Grail cycle; repeated dissection and commentary by literary scholars, considerable amplification in fiction, yet very little serious application of content in either religious or magical practice.

Grail lore was never part of formal worship; it was not debated upon by ecclesiastical authorities. In its assembled form for the ruling class, it contained strong monastic influences, by way of commentary designed to draw us away from the secret content and back to orthodoxy. This reluctance to tamper with old sources is a sure indication of their esoteric value, and of their quality of regeneration. On one extreme, even the orthodox Church was reluctant to ban or to bless a pagan-Christian tradition that was clearly a fundamental of the common consciousness; on the other, even if it had been anathematized, it would not have been destroyed or suppressed. The Church, in her wisdom, knew how to leave well alone.<sup>14</sup>

Within the works of Geoffrey, and Arthurian legends, we can find an entire Western mythology, combined with an esoteric tradition of both pagan and Christian revelation.<sup>15</sup> They contain practical Keys to magic, and cross-refer to the folk traditions that persisted into the present century.

*The literary and courtly sources must be combined with the oral and traditional sources to make a complete entity.*

This completed pattern begins with the symbology of the UnderWorld, carries us upon a Journey of Transformation, and brings us to the Inner Son of Light. This is not a religious culmination, but is a realization achieved by a resonance of consciousness between the individual and Solar principles.

As this is the basis of Western development by magical means, we will summarize the process briefly, and then return to each stage in detail during the course of our overall study of the symbols and interactions involved.

1. The traveller seeks the Gate to the UnderWorld.
2. He or she finds the Gate, and passes within.
3. A defined Journey is undertaken. This has specific stages, encounters, and Beings. As the Journey involves energy relationships between the Land and the Traveller, the entire organism, through to physical manifestation is re-polarized.
4. At the culmination of a series of transformations, the human Traveller is released from the UnderWorld.

In this moment of transition, the Keys to a new Mystery are offered. Up to this stage, the operator has been working with the powers of under-earth; now he or she perceives the Sun within the Heart of Earth. Magical analogy suggests this to be also the sun of the solar system. The overall Centrality is symbolized by the Arisen Solar Hero, and the resurrected body of Jesus in esoteric Christianity.

The UnderWorld Initiation is a catalytic process, and is equally effective for both Christian and non-Christian; the resulting central consciousness, however, may be attuned to past beliefs, or may demolish those beliefs utterly.

In the Arthurian legends, the method is defined as follows:

1. The King (Humankind) and the Land (both human and planetary body) are As One.
2. The King is sick, made separate from the Land.
3. Deep within the Heart of Earth is a Vessel of Rejuvenation.

This is the Holy Grail, struck from the Crown of Lucifer when he fell from Grace, and hidden within a secret Castle. It is also the Cauldron of the Great Mother in which all life is renewed. And it is the Cup of the Sacrament. In other words, it changes shape according to individual understanding, but retains its mysterious power of regeneration.

If we sought for a definition of the Grail, we could say: *'That which does not regenerate is not the Grail.'*

The Grail is the enabling vessel of the Lord of Light. He is Arthur, the human king who fails and is stricken. He is Belenos, the Arisen Sun of the pagan Celts.

He is the Anointed One or Christ, Keystone of the Arch of Heaven.

The Fisher King of the Grail legends, stricken by dissociation from life energy (maimed or castrated) was responsible for the health of the Waste Land. The identities of Arthur, the Fisher King, and the god Bran, are interchangeable. One traditional death and resurrection ceremony calls the king 'Arthur O' Bran'.<sup>16</sup>

We can find a similar relationship between Belenos, Mithra and Christ. Whereas the first group, that of Arthur, Fisher King and Bran, represent transition within the UnderWorld, the second group represent realization and liberation as a culmination of the Journey.

The crucial difference between the nature cycle of the pagans and the Christian revelation was that the Arisen Sun of Christ was not a power of Earth, but reflected constantly within the Earth as a power of mediation or redemption. This is obviously not the standard religious interpretation, but relies upon the tradition of the descent into the UnderWorld (Harrowing of Hell), and the physical nature of the resurrected body of Jesus. It was in this area of symbolism that pagan and Christian experience merged, and no doubt this was why the earliest forms of Christianity were attacked by the political Church and suppressed. Although the formal practices were banned or amalgamated and emasculated, the core of symbolism and initiatory knowledge passed into oral tradition, and later into the Grail manuscripts.

We should not confuse this esoteric teaching with matters of faith or religion or worship. It derives from a magical viewpoint in which the awareness of the world or continuum is a constant state of flux. Depending upon the degree of perception available to both the individual and the mass of humankind, patterns found within the flux will alter.

Accordingly, our Outerworld 'fell from Grace' in the sense of devolving from an Archetype or conceptual model within the awareness of Creation that was consequently lost to human consciousness.

Up to a certain point in time, historically, we were able to perceive this Model within the cycles of Nature: in birth, life, death and reincarnation, clearly reflected in the passage of Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter and the returning Spring.

Within this Wheel of Life, which is the pattern for the Magical Circle, was a hidden inspirational factor, able to cut through the cyclical or spiral round.

Esoteric teaching suggests that magical rituals over a long period of time accumulated sufficient energy to break the



barrier, to bridge the abyss between humanity and the Awareness from which we had devolved. The response was in an utterly personal manner, for a new degree of consciousness was made incarnate as a human being. This person, Jesus of Nazareth, made the UnderWorld transition. There is a tradition that he was taught in Britain by the Druids as a boy — which is not too surprising when we consider that Britain was a sacred land renowned for the teaching of spiritual matters.<sup>17</sup>

Originally humans made the UnderWorld Journey for the tribe, for the Land. We can still do this, if we so choose. Since the alteration to the flux or field of awareness which is attributed to Jesus Christ, the descent and resurrection of a new degree of being, a further stage is available to us; but only after the preceding transitions and initiatory experiences have been fulfilled. In religious faith, people depend upon the resonance of the god-form, or of Christ, for their inner sustenance. In the Mysteries we undertake to experience harmonics of these resonances within ourselves. The initiate eventually relives each mode of awareness, from the primitive cults of earth and death, to the sophisticated religion and Mysteries of the ancients, and on to a new degree of Awareness symbolized by the Christian saviour.

So much power was released by this Individual that it carried the weight of a world religion — an effect which could hardly have been planned by Jesus himself.<sup>18</sup> Esoterically, the true Keys were soon suppressed and concealed by modifications within the developing Roman Church. These changes were for blatantly political ends, but also for magical self-aggrandizement by those who still had the power-contact but refused to share it as was originally intended.

The revelation passed into common consciousness, where it remains and lives. The importance of the tradition that combines pagan and Christian powers is that it is a practical operative system. It is not theoretical, dogmatic or dependent upon individual mediation of hierarchies.

Within the Innerworlds there are groups of beings who are concerned with the UnderWorld Initiation, but they do not control it, nor does any group or order have a unique claim upon it.

Magic in literature has tended towards religious tone at one extreme, raising of consciousness through refined variants of orthodox prayer and ritual; and an elitist attitude at the other and more dangerous extreme, secret Masters, powers handed on, superiority over the ignorant. Neither of these polarities touch upon the heart of the Western Mysteries, which lies within the Earth, to be found by each person alone. To be uplifted through prayer and ritual is a temporary enlightenment which requires constant repetition, as is the communication of higher powers through hierarchical structures with human mediators. The first may provide solace, the second may educate, but neither brings the power out of the heart of Earth; and this is the true aim of all genuine magic.

It will be clear from the foregoing that the esoteric tradition is not evolutionary. Much confusion has been caused by trying to link magic with evolutionary theory. In the magical conception, there is no divine plan for evolution. On one level there is an interaction between human awareness and greater Awareness, through the mediation of Archetypes and associated sentient structures of energy; on another level, a reflection of the first, is interaction between human entities and the planetary being in its various manifestations.<sup>19</sup>

Humankind stands as a mediator between the Source of the Archetypes and the substance of the Land or Planet. This substance is said, in turn, to be composed of elements compounded from numerous other worlds. The Inner-worlds are not truly within the imagination, although that is our first entrance to them; they are within the fabric of the physical planet, and therefore within the human organism which partakes of the substance of that fabric.

To create a connection, a pattern within the flux of perception that corresponds with an Archetype that originated within the unknown Source, is the ultimate achievement of magic.

The UnderWorld Initiation fulfils the mediating role of humankind. Only when the individual has been through the UnderWorld can he or she mediate solar energies into the land, or bring the Light and Dark together.

As exemplified in the Arthurian legends, a failure upon

the way results in a 'short-circuit', and inevitably creates a physical illness.

It must be emphasized that this type of illness is *not* the neurotic or psychosomatic illness familiar to the psychiatrist, even though the paths of energy are very similar, for it derives from a deeper source than the individual psyche. The physical manifestation of the short-circuited earth awareness is epitomized by the Maimed King. He has a disease of the Blood, resulting in paralysis and impotence. In any exposition of initiatory systems, the dangers must be revealed, but if the symbolic keys are well learned and the quest pursued to its end, such dangers are overcome. As we shall discover in later chapters, the Dangers are, in fact, the Initiators that bless the Traveller.

The UnderWorld tradition, as has been suggested, is also known as the Secret Way Across the Abyss, or the Shortened Way. It does not require years of study or graded initiation. It is a series of related experiences that require persistence and courage rather than devotion or asceticism.

To commence upon the Shortened Way of the West, the candidate needs patience. Once the Passing Within has occurred, courage is required. To return and mediate, love is essential.

The advantage of working through the UnderWorld is twofold; not only does the ancestral or racial mythology offer foreknowledge of the symbols that one is likely to encounter, but it also provides the basic keys that unlock the Innerworlds initially.

According to the theories of metaphysics, in which there are many interlinked conceptual and energetic worlds, it is possible to work through the imagery in our anonymous lore; to bring it to life in its own attuned Innerworld, and to meet with the beings that live therein.

If we compare this procedure to the standard magical techniques offered in literature, some intriguing concepts are generated. The link between so-called witchcraft and heresy has already been touched upon, as has the preservation of pagan lore in monastic manuscripts, but there is an overall attitude to magical and alchemical literature which may be clarified by recourse to basic tradition.

The corpus in print or manuscript is generally treated as incoherent, inconsistent, corrupt and often absurd. A clarity is demanded from magical literature that is hardly present in modern technical manuals or textbooks on psychology. Whereas modern sciences are grandly allowed reams of jargon that can only be understood by a small number of specialists in each field of study, magic is expected to reveal itself in clear limpid terms accessible to all, otherwise to remain silent and accused of folly by its own lack of relationship to general readership.

This is a most prejudiced attitude; yet we may find ways which clarify the old texts, particularly when we place them in their correct social and religious context.

The obscure magical works were created in a society in which an oral tradition was alive and active (up to the early nineteenth century in the context of magical texts that still relate to native traditions, but this rule does not apply to later works that are entirely literary). The common language, the accessible units, are found within the oral tradition, and a reader of an early work on alchemy, or a listener or chronicler of the earlier Grail legends, or a peruser of the Black books and Grimoires, would have referred instinctively and automatically to the general pool of symbolism available in that tradition.

The modern student, weakened by the mania for reason and factual proof in writing, cannot find anchorage in the sea that represents mere jottings from the ocean of traditional lore. This confusion within magical or alchemical and mystical literature which materialists take such delight in criticizing is in part due to the lack of overall reference to tradition *within the modern mind*.

Three other sources of confusion add to the general mess:

1. Christian suppression, corruption and wilful confusion of symbolic patterns;
2. the demands of a materialist interpretation upon a non-materialist philosophy;
3. the modern psychological mania for labelling and interpretation according to very rigid preconceptions.

This emasculating effect of psychology causes many students

to abandon their magical experiments, and to lose altogether the value of the old texts, when these are found not to live up to the modern laws laid down regarding psychic growth in our society.

The ridiculous element of magical texts is often intentional rather than naive. By making absurd assertions, it is possible to jump beyond the barriers of regular habitual thought and action. Geoffrey of Monmouth set an early literary precedent for this technique, drawn from tradition, in the twelfth century. His *History of the Kings of Britain* was clearly absurd, yet he even went as far as to hint directly that it contained puns and mysteries that were accessible to speakers of the British (Welsh or Breton) tongue.

Geoffrey's work was a revolution in written esoteric lore, drawing from previous chronicles, but embodying the pagan and heretic traditions in a Latin text that employed Celtic sub-levels of lore and language. This enabled the traditions contained within the text to be amplified, exchanged and reworked within the educated circles attendant upon the ruling class in Europe. More important, Geoffrey's books present a challenge that has come down through time; solve the riddles, link the obscurities together in your own consciousness, and create magic. His *Life and Prophecies of Merlin* are two of the most significant books in esoteric lore in the West, yet modern occultists have hardly heard of them, let alone made any study of the contents.

The flood of works on alchemy which began not long after the appearance of the Arthurian legends in the twelfth century offers many examples of this same method of willed absurdity. No wonder the psychologists have struggled in vain with alchemy! More confusion has been generated through vain attempts to interpret alchemy in terms of psychology than all of the pedantic commercial emblem books published at the height of the alchemical craze.

It is too smug, too neat, to relax and suggest that the early texts are confused gropings after the refining light of modern psychotherapy. They were startling ways of presenting an established and fully developed method of self-knowledge and increased awareness, and covered areas that modern psychology has not begun to touch upon. To the occultist,

the failure of psychology is not surprising, for it is restricted to one time-bound dimension.

To close this chapter, we should be aware that not all people take the UnderWorld Journey, and that most of us do not even consider it. It is not an unavoidable or curative system of integration in the modern sense, and does not offer salvation or superiority. What is offered is change; *dis*-integration; and radically altered awareness. These are not qualities readily sought after.

Magical literature and folk tales are full of people with curious powers, particularly that of seership. Yet any experienced worker of magic will agree that clairvoyance and similar abilities are the common property of us all, and that in the advanced stages of initiation into the Mysteries, these psychic abilities are absorbed into higher functions which do not have any paranormal manifestation or material potential for abuse.

An individual who emerges from the UnderWorld, may or may not have unusual powers of consciousness or energy, but these are interim patterns, side-effects of the transformation. The greatest magical gift in the Western Tradition is not power, but 'the Tongue that Cannot Lie'. Beyond this stage, further development is of a spiritual order, and the magical initiations are superseded.

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## **Understanding the Initiation**

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It can be argued from both an esoteric and a modern psychological viewpoint that there are many reasons for avoiding the Journey through the UnderWorld.

The background to this hidden initiatory tradition is, as has been suggested previously, non-religious. It should be understood as a theme, a thread that weaves through many religions spanning centuries, yet which still works in its entirety for our present non-religious culture. Perhaps the most abused concepts, willingly perverted by both politics and religion, are those of morality and ethics. Unfortunately for the candidate, the initiations of the Mysteries demand ruthless insight into personal codes of conduct; yet they do not involve permanent moral, ethical or religious rules. This paradox is solved through initiation and participation, and not by discussion.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of instruction upon magical methods, either in publication or through individual teachers and their orders, falls into two major categories. The first of these tries to meet the objections to magical paradox by operating within the orthodox religious framework, by saying 'We are really part of regular respectable worship; we just have certain special practices which we also employ.' In the West, this inevitably means that many occult orders are branches of the state religion, Christian cults.

The second category is non-religious, in that it is not

confined to one stream of worship or variants of the orthodox religion of its native country. This type of magical work can lead to the unbridled pursuit of power for its own sake, and as it gains membership, often tends to increasing imbalance. The imbalance arises through the release of combined amplified energies in ritual, when such energies are not focused by specific higher-order images or by an Archetype. In rare cases, orders of this direction can become attuned to anti-human streams of consciousness; it has often been suggested that the symbolism of the Order of the Golden Dawn moves in such a direction, or that this particular Order laid the roots for magical symbolism supposedly employed by the Nazi hierarchy in pursuit of power. There is, however, no proof of such a connection.

A third category is often claimed to be Nature magic, expressed as modern Witchcraft. This activity was never a magical system in its own right, but was the nature aspect of each religion, pagan or Christian, or any other orthodox system such as Judaism or Islam. Each of the great religions is built upon a chthonic foundation, and in some cases, such as that of Tibetan Buddhism, the fusion has been remarkably effective.

Christianity slowly moved away from the lore of Nature, as it retained all the contacts in the Innerworlds from the supplanted pagan faiths. Yet the pagan religions went far beyond nature lore and animal magic, which are the essentials of witchcraft. The advanced philosophical and metaphysical aspects of paganism are virtually ignored by modern witchcraft revivalists, yet they are essential to any true understanding of the pagan world-view.

As the Christians have tried to mutilate the pagan wisdom by taking its supreme developments of philosophy without the foundation of Nature and Otherworld magic, so have the modern paganists picked up the cast-off generative organs and ignored the sublime body of which they were only one part.

Through all of these differing approaches to magic, there runs the instructive and often elusive tradition. The person who confronts this tradition is never offered a moral or religious code to follow, but the opportunity of undergoing a series of transformations. The Initiation of the UnderWorld



changes us, irrespective of our pagan or non-pagan starting point. As pre-conditioning affects the outcome of any growth or initiation, it is vitally important to understand the fundamental and non-sectarian nature of the primal symbols.

Pursuit of power is another of the magical paradoxes, for although certain degrees of power may be attained through devolved magic and subsequent parasitic Inner contacts, the actual Initiation removes the lust for power permanently. Magic cannot bestow its greatest gifts to the rigid personality-frozen soul; nor can any other aspect of life. We find this lesson repeatedly in folk tales and myths, where the process of gaining a desire, be it a jewel, a lover or a supernatural talent, alters the seeker so radically that the object of desire becomes valueless. This is a very accessible law of magical energy, for it is expressed upon the physical level by the cycles of sexuality; but on the meta-physical levels it manifests as transformation of awareness. One of the most ridiculous non-secrets of Western occultism was the whispered rumour of 'Sex Magic'; but all magic is sex-magic, as all magic involves polarity and exchanges of energy. Very little of it, however, involves gratuitous physical indulgence.

The participant of the UnderWorld Initiation acts out of his or her own will, not through compulsion or religious faith. A religion always commences with individual absorption into the group-entity; the Mysteries always commence with individual separation from that entity. Both ways reach the same goal if they are effective; but the UnderWorld is a shortened way, similar to those known from Eastern traditions, in which major alterations of consciousness are gained within one lifetime, or as we shall later see, a period of seven years.

The more destructive negative aspects of religious group-entities lead to the consumption of the individual soul by the group soul. This entirely magical procedure (i.e. non-spiritual) is well known and ruthlessly abused by religious hierarchies, and is a feature of at least one pseudo-Eastern cult operating in Europe and the USA.

Loss of individuality plays no part in the Tradition, but *individuality* should not be confused with *personality*. During the Journey, the personality is lost, shattered,

disintegrated; the individuality remains, emerges from the fire in its true nature. Our personalities are mainly an expression or reaction to the group-world; though this expression may accumulate and harden during the course of many lifetimes. The individuality is a direct reflection of the creative Archetype that resonates at the core of human life and being.

An astrological chart shows potential personality, carried over from past lives, and a clear indication of the nature of the Archetype reflected by the individuality. Very few of us have a harmonious balance between our true inner nature and our external personalities.

The breaking down of the personality, therefore, is regarded as inevitable and essential in magical growth. The growth cannot occur without the clarifying breakdown; hence the old term 'twice born' for initiates. During dissolution, the constituent elements of the personality, both superficial and long-term, are reduced. What remains are the individual archetypes, resonating in harmonic patterns attuned to the Life Source. This might be expressed astrologically as the realignment of the available factors into a balanced chart, and this is usually a matter of a fairly small but significant series of adjustments. (These changes are not the obvious removal of 'bad' aspects, for an easy chart may create as many problems for the individual as a difficult one.)<sup>2</sup>

The individual who achieves this state of adjustment may choose to reconstitute the most useful elements of the personality matrix that was expressed by the time and place of birth, or may even dissolve arrangement of the Four Elements altogether, replacing them with an archetype of his or her choice, such as one of the highly attuned magical images.<sup>3</sup>

Recourse to Archetypes or attuned Images without the essential catalysis results in stereotypical or imbalanced behaviour, an occurrence known to experienced occultists as 'overshadowing'. There are two varieties of Overshadowing; the first is the unfortunate state referred to above, while the second is a deliberate controlled operation within ritual circumstances, from which the mediator is able to detune at will. Neither of these states is

identical to 'possession' or 'obsession', which is a very rare occurrence indeed, involving a phantom or parasitic entity in relationship to a human victim. The occultist acknowledges a distinct difference between genuine obsession, and the commonplace fragmentation met with in psychotherapy.<sup>4</sup>

The Initiation of the UnderWorld, therefore, deals with dangerous interactions; but they only destroy the inflated personality, the fear-riddled mask that tyrannizes our individuality. We find an indication of this in the old tradition of satire; a bard or prophet had not only the power of Cursing and Blessing, but also that of Satirizing. We know from Celtic tradition that the satire of a bard could raise blisters upon a man's face; in other words, it brought his inner corruption and self-aggrandizement into full view. The dread of being satirized by a poet or seer lived on well into the nineteenth century in both Scotland and Ireland, and we still find a weaker version of it today in popular entertainment.

Understanding of initiation is not gained by reading books, though intellectual clues and stimulus are useful, but by a change of direction. When the life energies are solely directed to ends within the outer world, the un-self, the personality of modern psychology, is strengthened and made rigid. When the same energies are turned within, this false self or mask is weakened and dies.<sup>5</sup> We dread the cracking of our mask, and it can often fight for survival with surprising strength. There are a number of methods of introspection and analysis, either of Eastern origin, or of psychological therapeutic origin, which aim to correct the imbalanced mask and reduce its childish tyranny. The Western method is to break it down through ritual, visualization, and interaction with Otherworld beings — in effect a concentration and acceleration of learning by experience. In initiation lifetimes of gradual experience are encapsulated into dynamic episodes; this is the true purpose of magic, which has very little to do with 'wish-fulfilment'.

The UnderWorld journey offers us a secret way, a short cut that links inner and outer worlds conclusively through the physical body and the environment. This magical transformation comes into effect through application, and

not through faith or devotion. The will to take this journey is not a momentary decision or an emotional impulse; it grows within the awareness as a slow inevitable growth, like that of a crystal within the earth. At the right time, in the right place, the will to pass through the UnderWorld crystallizes within one's self; when many other choices have been absorbed and understood, the deep impulse to be transformed beyond return is born.

Escape plays no part in Western initiation; there is no urge to flee the sorrows of the world, for these sorrows are known to be cured by a reformation of the body-psyche interaction. By this, we do not mean the integration within society offered by mental therapy, but an integration of a different order. One teaching which Western tradition holds in common with certain branches of Buddhism is that only in the human state can we attain enlightenment, for ultimately spirit and body are one complete being. This great truth is shown graphically upon the Tree of Life, but it must be brought to fruit individually through experience.

## 4.

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# The Power of Giving

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The Tree symbol is central to the Western traditions in general, and is particularly important in the UnderWorld. Although the variants of the Qabalistic Tree of Life are well known in publication, there are other Trees in magical tradition, which are often ignored or forgotten by students.

Traditional lore in which the Tree appears falls into three categories:

1. Pagan symbolism without any Christian influence;
2. early Christian with pagan influence;
3. a body of numerical educational songs called 'the Keys of Heaven', which incorporate symbolism from very diverse sources.

The songs and ballads which we shall examine in Part Two are in the English language, found in Britain and the United States of America; comparisons will be made with European counterparts from various historical periods, such as texts in Latin or poems in Norman French, and with early material from Scotland, Ireland, Wales or Brittany. Primarily we shall be concentrating upon the basic verses themselves, as they have been generated within the shared memory.

In our selected examples, and in the greater bulk of oral tradition at large, there are three types of Tree.

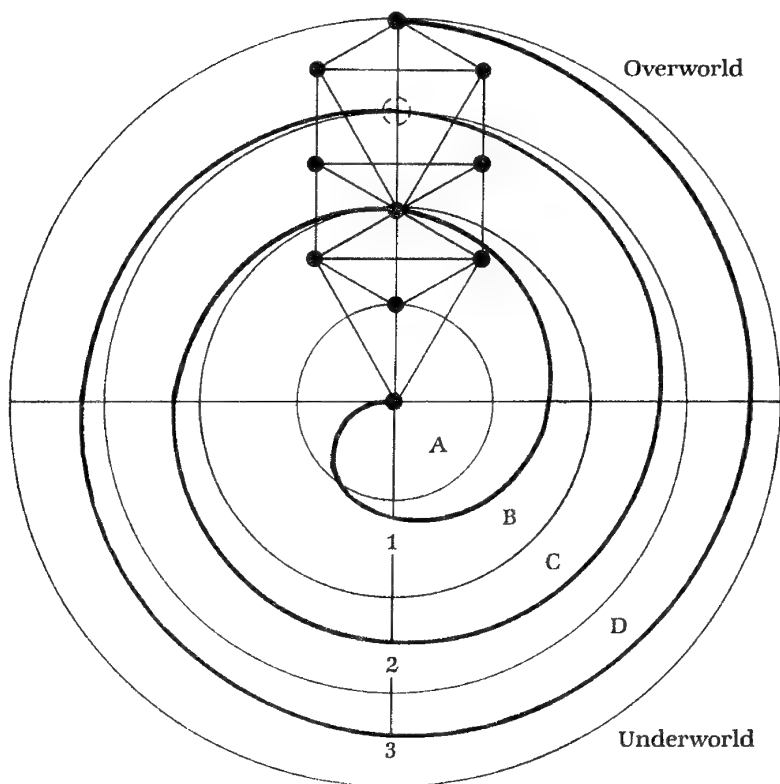
1. A simple magical Tree, linked to a human spirit, ghost or phantom;
2. the Tree of Life, which grows at the Boundary to the Otherworld;
3. the Universal Tree of Life, which demonstrates the relationship between the Worlds.

General tree and plant lore runs through each of these types, and may partake of any one or of all three depending upon its context.

Magical work in the West has been limited by unnecessary concentration upon the Qabalistic Tree to the exclusion of all others, and we cannot truly relate to the Universal Tree of Life until we have understood and experienced its manifestations in the two worlds which precede it: the Natural World (Category 1) and the Otherworld (Category 2). Strictly speaking the manifestations of the Tree stand at the boundaries: so our first Tree is at the boundary of the Human World and the Natural World; the second is at the boundary of the Natural World and the UnderWorld or Otherworld, while the third Tree is at the transition between the UnderWorld and the Overworld or Universe. Each aspect of the Tree may bear fruit in our consciousness without understanding or experiencing the Threefold relationship, but the complete Tree of Life partakes of all three, and is not magically operative without all three functions enlivened (see Diagram 1).

### **1. The Magical Tree**

The primal definition of the Tree in ancient lore is that of a natural tree inhabited by the personality of a dead ancestor. This is Ancestor lore at its most fundamental, where the spirit of the dead man or woman has passed into the Land. This belief, exemplified by a number of European ballads and folk tales is not as simplistic as we are led to believe. It is usually interpreted as belonging to a crude basic realm of general superstition, where undeveloped humans made no distinction between themselves and their environment. Idealists think of this as a state of innocence, while materialists know that it is a state of brutish ignorance. The esoteric traditions regarding the pre-history of mankind

**Diagram 1. The Threefold Tree of Life**

**Three Trees: Initiation, Transformation, Mediation.**

1. The First Tree stands at the Boundary of the Human and Natural Worlds.
2. The Second Tree stands at the Boundary of the Natural World and the UnderWorld.
3. The Third Tree is Universal, and links the UnderWorld and the Overworld/Universe.

**The Stages of Descent = Stages of Ascent by Spiralling Harmonics.**

- A. Realm of the Body/Psyche in Unity: State of Passing Within.
- B. Realm of the Four Elements in Unity: State of Inner Fire.
- C. Realm of Twelve Archetypes in Unity: State of Guardianship.
- D. Realm of Countless Ancestors in Unity: State of Unity in Spirit.

offer quite a different teaching, which does not include evolution from animal condition.<sup>1</sup>

The truth behind this apparently crude symbolism is rather sophisticated, and comparable to the refined conceptualizing of the developed religions. It also represents a magical method which was employed in early cultures, but which is not required today. It is too easy to mock primal beliefs from a mechanistic viewpoint. We are repeatedly offered notions in print that are quite ludicrous if we consider them with a grain of common sense: that primitives do not understand the process of reproduction; that magic developed through wish-fulfilment rituals; that metaphysical beings are inventions to ward off fear of natural phenomena. Yet topics closely related to these same aspects of 'ignorance' formed the foundations of the great civilizations of Greece, Rome and Persia, with their complex politics, their sophisticated engineering, their philosophy and their considerable materialist strength.

If we consider the pagan philosophy of the UnderWorld, which weaves through all metaphysical systems, it soon becomes apparent that the First Tree, containing a soul or spirit of an ancestor, is part of a complex inter-relationship, and not a crude notion to explain away the rustling of leaves in the wind, or even an example of belief in metempsychosis or transmigration of souls. Julius Caesar made a famous statement to the effect that the Druids taught the passage of souls from one body to the other;<sup>2</sup> this is frequently used to prove Celtic acceptance of reincarnation, as Caesar was recording his case against the Druids at a time when they still held considerable power, based upon sanctuaries in Britain.

Writers upon folklore, magic and occult theory have often seen ballads and folk tales which feature transmigration (such as our example "The Cruel Mother") as evidence of a system whereby we ascend and descend the orders of life, like a game of moralistic snakes and ladders. This is also claimed as an Eastern teaching, with perhaps more justification. In the Western traditions, however, we should look for a more subtle interpretation.

The image of a soul or spirit that speaks from a Tree, or the parallel image of a soul passing into a stone or even an



animal or some other non-human embodiment has many esoteric implications. A number of these implications still hold true in modern magical work, while others are no longer valid, as their purpose seems to have been fulfilled or superseded.

If we consider the very roots of the tradition, we find that the UnderWorld is the Source of Life and Death. In old Welsh tales, the Pig actually came from the UnderWorld, stolen by a hero from the King of the Dead.<sup>3</sup> Totem animals are intimately associated with the spirits of the dead in Celtic lore, and with the magic of Transformation which we shall consider in a later chapter.

The Key to this symbolism is that the Ancestors and the Land are At One.

Anything that comes up out of the UnderWorld, such as a Spring, a Stone, totem animals or birds, or a Tree, can therefore speak with the unified voice of the Ancestors and the Land. Ancient augury was concerned with the motion of plants, animals, smoke, the wind in trees, and similar patterns. Even the highly developed civilizations such as Rome retained augury within their political structure; the Roman Haruspices were inherited from the ancient Etruscans. In such a system, the land was seen as a whole entity, in which the wisdom of gods and goddesses, and the power of the UnderWorld, was expressed through specific natural rhythms.

The human sacrifice, often called the Ritual of the Sacred King in modern works, was the epitome of this system; as a magical act of power it went far beyond mere synchronicity. The sacrifice was originally a voluntary and honorable role, and was attuned to a specific site, such as a hill, stone circle, spring, river bend or crossroads. In folklore such sites are still held to contain the Saints, Fairies, Giants or Ancestors. An act of this sort depends upon several factors which are known to esoteric science, but which hardly ever appear in publication. The crude concept of a soul passing intact into a mineral or vegetative locus as the result of a brutal death, falls far short of the inner understanding of the sacrificial rites.

That which is attuned to the Tree or other focal point is not the Soul, but an echo of the extinct personality, known

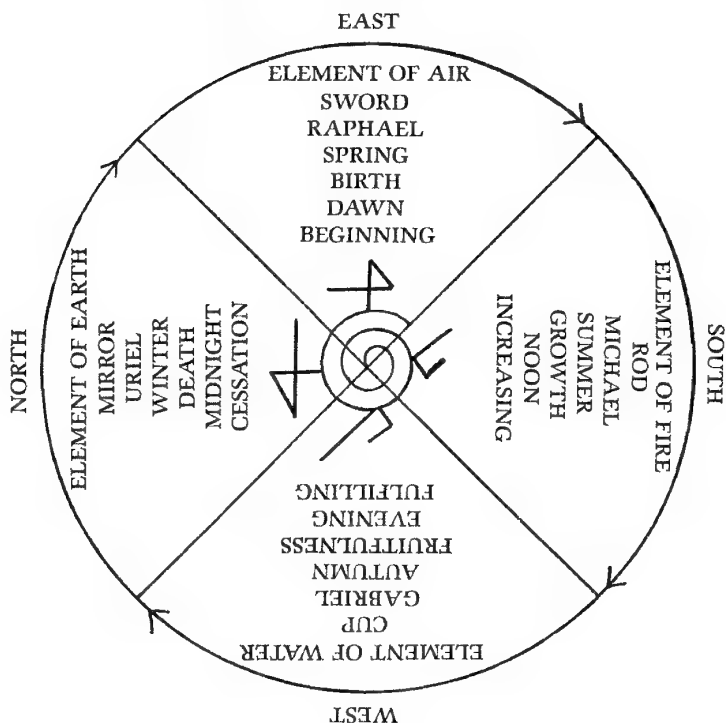
in esoteric terminology as the Phantom. This resonance is *not* the individual, but a form built upon the interaction of thought and emotion, a form which is shed upon physical death.

During death, the Phantom can undergo various processes, some automatic, some self-willed, and others controlled by exterior agencies as in certain magical rituals. It can be absorbed by the dying individual who created it as a mask during the lifetime, this taking either the form of 'forgiveness of sins' whereby the absorption is aided by Innerworld beings, or as 'release from karma' whereby the spirit utterly negates the mask upon liberation into other dimensions of consciousness.

The Phantom may also be shed, and undertake a limited life of its own. Beings of this sort leech the energies of spiritualists at their quasi-religious gatherings, drawing life-power in exchange for trivial gossip. Occasionally they attend ill-considered magical rituals; but the unabsorbed Phantom will usually disperse after the decay of the physical body to which it is attuned.

Particularly strong Phantoms, energized by violent lust or passion, or by unbalanced self-image during a powerful lifetime, may survive. These feed off the raw energies of spiritists, and the surges of energy from excitable gatherings such as religious revival meetings, in which sexual power is amplified by the fake emotion whipped up in the group mind. In some situations, such as fervent gatherings, ritualized sports, mass music concerts with destructive symbolism, the Phantoms may work in league with unhuman entities, forming a dangerous chain of mediation between the human and anti-human worlds. Such creatures may exist for long periods after the dissolution of the original physical body, but they are not the individual, any more than a film or photograph is the real person who once stood in front of the camera. Their most obvious attribute is that they repeat themselves, both in action and in communication, for they have no originaive ability whatsoever, only a very limited repertoire which can be played over until it fades.

In very rare and exceptional cases, a Phantom may become a nuisance to human beings, and so have to be dispersed

**Diagram 2. The Wheel of Life**

by suitable ritual work. The secret of exorcism is twofold: firstly it appeals through prayer or mediation to Otherworld beings for assistance beyond the ability of most humans; secondly it reveals to the Phantom that it has no real life, that the Phantom does not, in fact, exist. Once this concept penetrates the energy field, the Phantom dissolves.

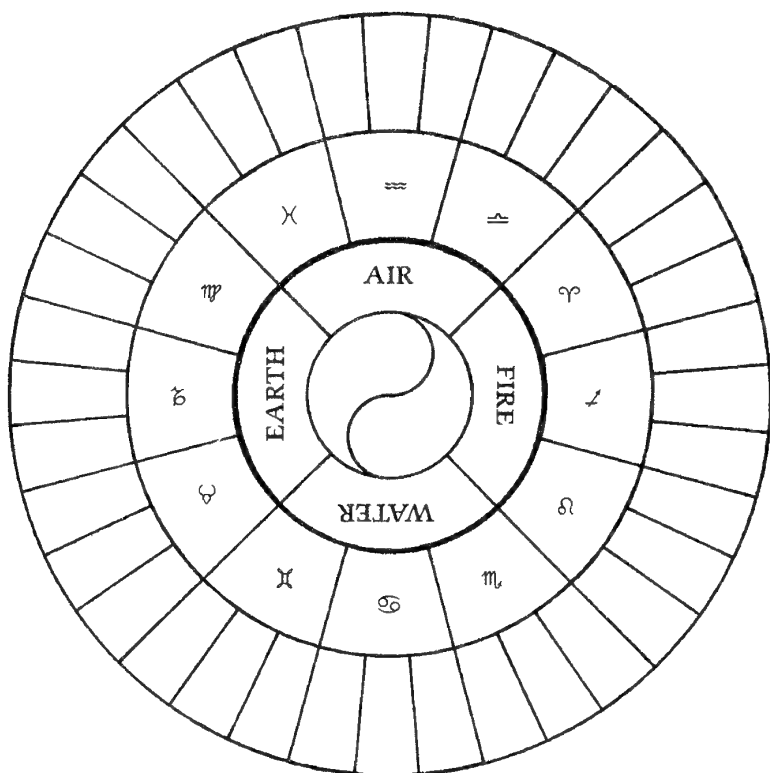
In a normal death, the Phantom is dispersed quite quickly around the Wheel of Life (see Diagram 2) like a reversed replay of an old film. The basic attributes of our personal Phantoms often reassemble upon reincarnation, and this process is intimately related to the magical merge of time and place which is shown in an astrological chart, and which creates potential patterns for the new personality.<sup>4</sup>

Working knowledge of this cycle was central to ancient nature magic, where the Wheel of Life was used over long time periods in the Sacred King rituals, to establish a line

**Diagram 2(a). The Wheel of Life**

The Wheel has Four Cycles of Expression.

1. Innermost Circle: Individual/Spirit/Being.
2. Second Circle: Elements/Seasons/Archangels or Great Beings.
3. Third Circle: Signs/Stars/Archetypes.
4. Fourth Circle: Ancestors/Land/Personality.



of connected deaths and rebirths aimed at Innerworld mediation that could not be disturbed or broken. In modern magical practice this system is misunderstood or shunned, for our modern 'occultist' is as afraid of the spirits of the dead as his or her orthodox Christian neighbour!

By magical ritual, therefore, the Phantom of the Sacrificial Victim was attuned to an environmental location. This was aimed at linking through a specific mediation between the Human World and the UnderWorld or source of all life and death. Through this link, which operated in a manner similar to that of the bucket-chain or relay system, a very active contact was maintained with the Ancestors. This link, energized through the Phantom, was attuned for a definite time period, and then dissolved.<sup>5</sup>

We can find evidence of this system in the Christian practices: the dead were buried around the Church in 'hallowed' ground, for Earth involves a long period of physical decay, in which the phantoms of the departed remain attuned to the sacred precinct (but not their souls or spirits). Passing the body through Fire, however, is very rapid, and the relative merits of burial, cremation or exposure were an important part of the magical science of early people.

When we find a personality becoming a Tree, in folk or early accounts, we are encountering a remnant of the system suggested.

The time or rotation factor is relevant, also, as the Phantom is not bound forever to its locus. In places where a regular Mystery cycle has been upheld, there are significant stages of development after the dissolution of the Phantom. The site becomes attuned to the deeper spirit of the Ancestors; but not without the primitive mediation as a root, and not without the rotation or solar and stellar relationship shift. Powerful mediators, in human life, can link Innerworld contacts onto a physical site by ritual, and this is the basis of consecration. In consecration the sacrifice is an inner action on the part of the mediator, or if the ritual is orthodox, it is a reflection of the sacrifice of the Saviour, Prophet, or Ancestor in whose name the mediation is accomplished.

In prehistoric times, many sacrificial Kings were entombed in massive structures; these caused geomantic patterns of

energy to hold through long periods of outer time or planetary rotation. (See Appendix 'The Tomb of a King' for an account of one such site.<sup>6</sup>) In tradition, the First Tree holds an echo or Phantom of an Ancestor, because its roots reach down into the Earth.

The nature of Phantoms is well defined in folklore, for trees and flowers grow out of the graves of frustrated lovers, animated by excessive grief or wild emotion. Often a river, lake or church door separates the lovers in traditional themes, and the trees grow until they join together in an arch. This is a very important esoteric symbol: a man and woman growing in tree-form, and twining and merging together as the crown of an arch made by their bodies. This symbol is also found as the Alchemical Rebus, the creature with two bodies merging in one beautiful head, and of course in the Platonic reference to the circularity of the original androgynous human.<sup>7</sup>

In a few folk songs and tales, this unity over diversity is cut down by a jealous relative, in the role of return to imbalance through revenge or unassimilated passion.<sup>8</sup>

## **2. The Initiatory Tree**

The Initiatory Tree, which stands at the Gate of the UnderWorld, plays a different role to that of Qabalistic/Christian myth. We may find the Tree of Life growing in locations which are Boundary Places, or Gateways between the Worlds. In the Scottish ballad 'The Wife of Usher's Well' this Tree is a birch, renowned in folklore for magical properties, often of an apotropaic nature. It marks the transition between the land of the living and of the dead; hats made of birch-bark are not only the badge of the dead, but are a bond tying them to the Otherworld during visits to the human realm. This so-called 'necromantic' tradition is examined in detail in our later chapters.

The Initiatory Tree also appears in 'The Lailly Worm', a text which contains several of the major Symbols of the Western Tradition. This ballad is a variant of the magical transformation cycle, commencing with a Tree encircled by a Serpent (see Appendix 3 for a full text). The Serpent or Lailly Worm, is in fact the hero of the tale, for he is an enchanted young knight who has been shape-changed by

a witch. After his liberation, he returns to his own true appearance, as 'the finest young knight that ever your eyes did see'.

The basic ancestral/vegetative bond is inseparable from a deeper mode of symbolism, that of the Universal Tree. The Serpent is redeemed through the use of the Wand, 'a wee siller wand', one of the Four Magical Implements. As in Serpent guise he has slain Seven Brave Knights, and is prepared to slay his own father, he is that Dragon or Great Serpent which coils around the Tree of Life, incorporating seven of the Spheres within its folds.

The Tree, in ballad context, is not only indicative of the Otherworld Boundary (as in the story of Peredur where it is half made of green leaves, and half of flames)<sup>9</sup> but also of a transcendent symbolism whereby the natural tree-spirit (Phantom) relationship is revealed as a mirror of deeper Mysteries.

In the initiatory text of 'Thomas the Rhymer' the seer begins his UnderWorld Journey under a tree. This was traditionally a hawthorn tree, and an actual thorn tree was preserved in the village of Earlston in lowland Scotland until the nineteenth century, claimed as the magical Tree of Thomas.

The mysterious Queen of Elfland approaches the seer beneath the hawthorn tree, and carries him off. Symbolism of this nature occurs in the traditions relating to Merlin, and is part of a coherent and operable system of magic.

The Queen conducts a sacramental rite with bread and wine during the Journey; the same ritual is found in 'The Wife of Usher's Well' for summoning the dead. The source for this symbolism is not a mockery of the Catholic mass, but an old ritual which pre-dates the Christian communion, yet which is related to it. We shall find that this mass ceremony is central to the initiatory catalysis, when we examine the Initiation of Thomas in detail.

Thomas Rhymer begins his Journey under a tree, the Eildon Tree of physical manifestation, but leading to the Otherworld. He encounters the Tree a second time within the UnderWorld, as the Tree of Initiation. At first it is the Forbidden Tree, and the Queen of Elfland warns him that its fruit 'bears all the plagues of Hell', or that it has 'beggared

man and woman' in his own country. Yet this same tree, described as a golden or silver apple tree, or of mixed fruits and nuts in Celtic lore, is the very source of the gift — the Tongue that Cannot Lie. It is only transformed or purified through the mediation of the female power: the Queen of Elfland.

The Thomas ballad and its related Romance verses are frequently interpreted as being influenced by the myth of the Garden of Eden.<sup>10</sup> Yet it is quite clearly a myth of a different order altogether, in which quite different things occur. Firstly it is not a myth of expulsion, but of acceptance and return after testing by devotion and endurance. Secondly, it moves beyond the primal world, Eden, or the fruitful aspect of the UnderWorld, to a Universal initiation.

The fruit of the UnderWorld Tree is only poisonous in its untransmuted state. The transmutation is fertilized by the Queen of Elfland, an aspect of the Great Goddess. We find this theme in alchemy, where the stone of eternal life is made from common dirt, or in tales and ballads such as 'King Henry' where a hideous hag is turned into a beautiful maiden through being allowed to have her own will.<sup>11</sup>

Something happens which transforms the forbidden and dangerous into the beautiful and blessed. It is the love exchange between the initiate and the powers of life and death, or the willingness of Thomas to pick fruit for the Queen of Elfland.

This Tree of both deadly poison and of the truthful tongue and sight, is the Tree of Initiation, or more specifically, the Tree of Transformation.

In some ballads, the Tree is connected with externalized powers of transformation, and with childbirth. In 'The Cruel Mother' the passage of souls from the Otherworld is effected *by leaning upon a tree*. This brings the ancestor out into the womb, and so to birth. Leaning on a strong tree for childbirth is also symbolic of drawing upon the UnderWorld powers for assistance, drawing up the mother earth energies from the roots of the tree.

In 'Tam Lin' it is the pulling of roses, or the plucking of herbs that causes Tam Lin to come to fair Janet's arms. Without this summoning via the tree-interface, he is a human trapped in Elfland. As his tree is the rose-tree, Tam



Lin is of that order of Innerworld contacts who merge spiritual and physical love; and this symbolism is confirmed by analysis of his transformative rescue from Elfland. (See Part Two for a full analysis of the theme.)

Invariably we find: the Tree; Transformation; a Female Power. This Power not only affects transformations upon others, but also upon herself. It is too easy to suggest that she is 'the Goddess', for in some initiatory sequences, she specifically tells us that she is not. In the enduring magical traditions, an Innerworld being will always demonstrate his, her or its spiritual identity and function, and the Queen of Elfland tells Thomas that he should not greet her as 'the Queen of Heaven', for she is queen of a different realm which turns out to be under the ground. Revivalist pagan cults often fall into the metaphysical trap of believing that all Female Innerworld Beings are the Goddess; all are *reflections* or *aspects* of the Goddess, in the same way that all men and women are reflections of the male and female Powers of Creation. In practical magic, many operations simply do not work unless the inner powers are treated according to their true identity; and one of the most common causes of failure or imbalance is the rash assignment of worship to beings that are no more nor less divine than ourselves. The same trap is found in the all-embracing spirituality of 'New-Age' enthusiasts, who muffle the discretion and the inner intuition with a cosy glow of peace, love and brotherhood.

None of the foregoing in any way detracts from the ultimate premise of the Mysteries, that if we know ourselves, we come to know Divinity.

So essential is the Tree sequence that we find it again in the heretical Christian song 'The Leaves of Light'. This is a vision of Jesus Christ nailed to a yew Tree (yew is the traditional death tree, one of the trees aligned to the dark face of the Mother). His dying is witnessed by his Mother Mary, one of a company of seven Virgins. The narrator is called Thomas, and may be derived from the esoterically important figure of doubting Thomas, who touched the resurrected body of Jesus, and so ascertained its actual corporeality. He is also a variant of Thomas the Seer, for he experiences a theophany beneath a Tree.

There is a clear parallel between our esoteric Christian

song, and the entirely pagan ballad of 'The Lailly Worm' with its Seven Knights, a supervising stepmother or witch, and the hero suffering upon the Tree in the form of a Serpent.

A bridge between the pagan and Christian Tree lore is found in the remarkable 'Corpus Christi Carol', also called 'Down in Yon Forest'. This carol has both medieval and traditional variants, in which a dying Orchard houses a mysterious wounded knight or lover. His symbols are the Heron, the Hawk, the Hound, and the Sacred Stone. From his wounds stream water and blood, giving us the closest traditional theme to the literary Grail mythology set out in the Middle Ages. The Grail is not mentioned in oral tradition, but the magical elements that lead to it are clearly defined. Undoubtedly the Grail was prevalent in the oral tradition of past centuries, but in a primitive form as a vessel of plenty, or even of magical power and retribution.<sup>12</sup>

During the Journey through the UnderWorld, the Traveller finds a manifestation of the Tree at the junctions of the Way, the realms where the Worlds meet face to face. In its simplest form, it marks the Gate, but at a later stage it stands as the hub of the Wheel of Creation (see Diagram 3).

Thirdly the Traveller encounters the Universal Tree, by which the purified soul (not the Phantom) returns to the outer worlds to express wisdom and understanding through the power of love.

The Transformation at the second appearance of the Tree may be likened to death, in seven stages. The energy vortices of the body are also seven in number, and the esoteric teachings always stress that these energies are corrosive or poisonous unless aroused and transformed in the correct manner.<sup>13</sup>

It is no accident that Thomas Rhymer or Tam Lin, or many of the ballad characters are sexually involved with the Female Power, with an Otherworld Woman. In Eastern tradition the physical sexual magic of the secret knowledge systems has been preserved; both in its male-female ritualistic application of Tantra, and its bisexual application in other branches of yoga.

The power centres hinted at by esoteric traditions, Eastern or Western, are all sexual; they all generate and circulate life energies through to the physical body. The important

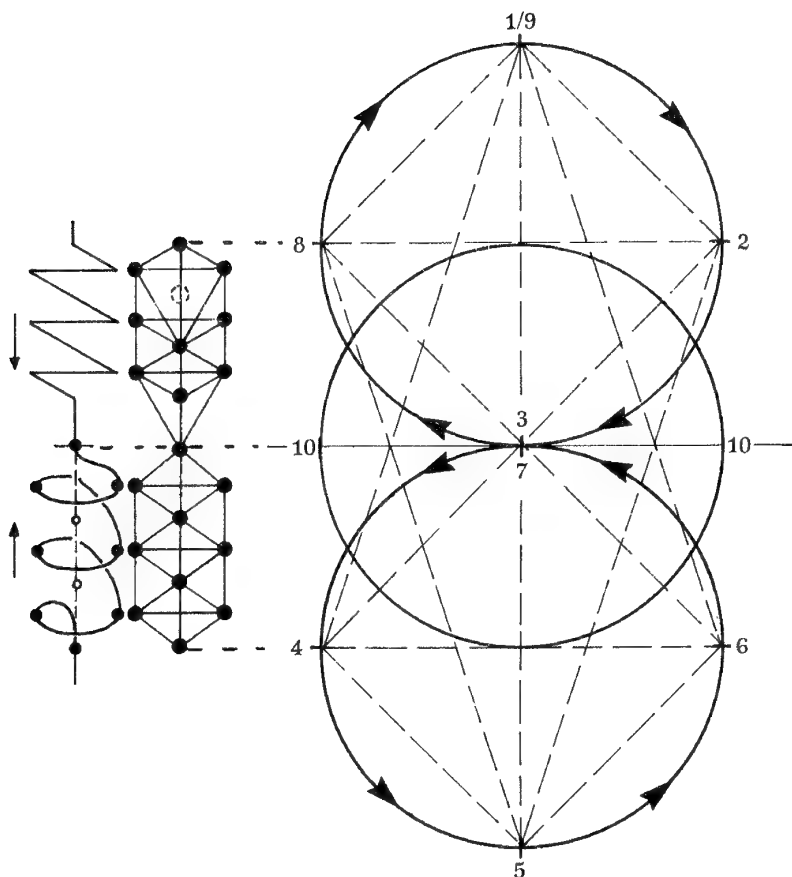
**Diagram 3. The Spiral Tree of the Universe**

To read this Glyph, follow Numbers 1-9 in sequence around the Double Cycle of the interlinked Circles.

The central line 10-10 is our Outer World.

The standard Tree of Life and the UnderWorld Tree shown to the left of the main Figure show the extent of the Overworld and the UnderWorld within the compass of the Universal Spiral Tree.

This Glyph is the basis for our cover design, The Vision of The Three Worlds.



difference between the Eastern methods and the UnderWorld of the West is that in the UnderWorld all action occurs in metaphysical dimensions. The use of physical sexual arousal and consummation, or any of the related yoga practices for the body, are obviated by the effects of the Journey.

In magical working, the physical and metaphysical both act as one unity, and are not considered to be separate other than in our limited and illusory mentality. Lest this teaching be misunderstood as a spurious rejection of physical expression of love, the type of folly that one finds associated with escapist 'spirituality' or with extreme asceticism or mortification, it should be added that the sexual expression is only obviated as a magical act; it is not discarded altogether or treated as being inferior. The change of direction of consciousness so essential to initiation may be equally gained by well-known sexual methods, but these tend to be prone to personality inflation or addictive developments, and are not catalytic in the same mode as the UnderWorld Initiation.

The transformation within must act through relationship with a Female Power, but should not be utterly identified with the pagan foundation of the Goddess. The Transforming power may take shape within the imagination, or outwardly as a manifest symbol of a number of different Goddesses, but such a shape is not of itself a justified focus for worship. As we shall discover, worship of this power as divine may lead to imbalance of mind, soul and body; the type of imbalance that we are familiar with in problems arising from identifying the divine as being utterly masculine, or as vaguely neuter.<sup>14</sup>

Within the old ballads is a consistent key to magical power and transformation, which is summarized below.

In orthodox religion Woman aided in tempting Man to eat of the forbidden Fruit, bringing about the expulsion from Eden, which was of itself a reflection or harmonic of the Fall of Lucifer. In pagan and esoteric Christian lore, it is Woman who *transforms* the Fruit from an unbearable and deadly poison to the elixir of Life, the Apples of Immortality.

The story of the Tree of Life found in the medieval Lancelot/Grail legends links the genuine tradition to the wilful orthodox perversion of the symbolism.<sup>15</sup>

This core tradition has world-wide parallels, particularly where chthonic cult and advanced religious philosophy have merged successfully. Yet this global unity of theme should not trick us into assuming that all Ways are identical; some routes home are more roundabout and time-consuming than others. Astrology has always held the indicators of this instruction, for it is the physical land of your birth that indicates the Inner Way which you should follow.

Upon the Journey, the destructive powers are more valuable than the creative. This may seem the contrary of hallowed magical and religious instruction, such as invocation of higher powers, seeking the gift of Grace, or the benefit of mediation of kindly beings; yet it is essential for the effective use of magic, and ultimately leads to spiritual enlightenment. So valuable is this one concept, that it has been suppressed and concealed for centuries in formal confirmation upon spiritual paths. Worse, it has been perverted into a disguise of 'active evil' building a barrier of nonsense around the imagination.

Some fragments of the catabolic teaching have appeared in a confused form in publication, particularly in the old grimoires and magical tracts which come to us from a period when literacy and oral tradition were still mutually interactive. These seemingly bizarre works may be illuminated by the UnderWorld, and are often more accurate and effective than either modern occultists or psychologists have realized. This is not to suggest that we pick up the nearest Black Book and begin superficial conjuration; the language and symbols must be reassessed, for they are the technical jargon of mingled traditions within an oral and visionary framework of reference.

The Female Power, exemplified by the mysterious witch, queen or fairy woman in the old songs and tales, is the power of the Left Hand, the negative pole of the Tree of Life.

In general exposition a great deal of nonsense has been generated about sin, evil, devils, temptation and the like, all attached quite wilfully to the Left Hand Path. Woman is supposed to be the temptress of Man, the mediator of sin to humanity at large. In occult texts, Saturn, the Devil and Death (as Tarot Trumps) are associated with the Left Hand Pillar. We are the victims of centuries of abuse and

intentional misrepresentation; and in the wake of this nonsense true evil has been allowed to flourish unchecked and unopposed.

The damage effected by this twisting of viable symbols is clear within the social structures of the twentieth century; the lamentable imbalance of the male/female relationship is but one manifestation of true evil. We even find this imbalance spilling over into magical revival practices ostensibly aimed at restoring the Goddess to her rightful place, for some groups take to the opposite extreme and reject all male viability and power as being evil and unnecessary. It is in this context that we must beware of the goddess images that we mediate, for some are indeed the Destroying Face of the Mother, but this is a phase within a cycle. Ultimately She is the Great Goddess, and both Men and Women are Her beloved children.

By blocking and corrupting the flow of energy, inspiration, and liberation found within the relationship between male and female energies in their multitude of forms, authoritarian symbolists sought to control the spiritual flow of power (Apostolic succession). Not only was the Christian succession misdirected and eventually closed down, but any other Innerworld source of inspiration or power was made unavailable too. The damage to human life-energies was far in excess of the obvious material and social evil of a ruthless religious-political hierarchy such as the various aspects of Christianity, which dominated the Western world until the horrible purging of the two great wars in the first half of the twentieth century.

Regrettably, occult teaching is equally biased. The Woman is seen either as a Mother or Virgin, or as a Temptress. Esoterically, the destructive power is feminine, and this role must be restored among the attributes listed above for effective magical work. The negative female power is shown in the pagan tradition, not influenced by Hebrew Qabalah, and in traditions such as those of South America, or of Tibetan Buddhism.

The widespread symbolism of the Negative female power is not derived from Christian roots, or from Hebrew tradition adapted for the West; these subsequent teachings abused the foundation that exists within common consciousness.

The presence of the female power within ancient and enduring tradition is evidence of a certain understanding, a cognition of shape and energy that is natural to humankind, and which extends throughout many Worlds, having a true Archetype in the creation of the Universe.

We are not, therefore, discussing an old outmoded paganism, nor a perversion of nature by hierarchical manipulation. The negative female power is not the psychic product of ignorance and fear, but a reality that activates levels of awareness generally inaccessible to the individual.<sup>16</sup>

In our early literary books of magic, Demons are said to appear in hideous form as the result of vile conjurations. The first exhortation of the medieval magician was 'Transform! Transform!'

The Names of God are traditionally employed as the means of compelling this transformation, and a great truth is hidden close below the surface of the procedure. The entire drama of medieval magic, and of some later works still within the old tradition, is generally dismissed as egocentric rubbish, or perhaps as formalized fear of the unconscious, repressed guilt surfacing in ritual mode, or as dangerous interference with unknown powers. Yet it is none of these, despite the obvious truth that any personal weakness may cause it to spill over into one of the imbalances listed.

Anyone who has studied traditional lore, even superficially, will know that there is a clear link between the magician's demand for transformation, and the myths wherein a loathsome lady is changed into a great beauty.<sup>17</sup>

Both the pagan myths and the medieval rituals are indicative of that which occurs in the UnderWorld.

This is not identical to the transformation of the demons or goblins of the personality that is effected by psychotherapy, though such a change may be a reflection of the deeper process. Bringing such personal problems out into the general consciousness and rationalizing their elements, neutralizing their apparent power, is a temporary cure. It may work very well in certain individuals, and be ineffective in others. Collectively psychotherapy applies to the transition period of consciousness at the collapse of the Christian/materialist cycle, but it does not touch upon the UnderWorld in which such cycles are generated.

In the hidden Tradition, the 'demons' or daemons are actual entities. Their body of expression is conditioned by the personal store of images within the psyche, but their nature within their own Worlds is true to its own laws of being.<sup>18</sup>

Astrologers are familiar with this type of occurrence in a rather interesting manner; if the native or subject of a chart refuses to resolve difficult tendencies indicated in the pattern, then another person appears within the life-circle who epitomizes those same qualities or tendencies. A dynamic interaction follows, often of a negative nature. In extreme cases the refusal to resolve may lead to physical illness or accident, reflected within the potential paths of the astrological chart. This is identical to the traditional appearance of a Demon within the Magical Circle.

We are not suggesting that so-called demons appear in human form and cause illness and accident, but that the demonic response is generated within the human psyche from a deeper source, and it is at this deepest level that it must be resolved.

If the magician is unable to relate to Innerworld beings correctly, then their effect upon his or her limited or unbalanced psyche may be demonic — confusing, restricting, wild, uncontrolled, self-destructive, dangerous to innocents, and so forth. This is directly comparable to passing excessive energy through a weak or faulty conducting medium or component.

Humans are seldom vehicles for truly evil entities; they merely reflect imbalances of consciousness out into physical action. Human interaction, in daily life, is the slowest mode of magic, taken by many individuals over many lifetimes.

It is the understanding and application of the Left Hand Female powers that opens the Shortened Way, and leads to intensified interaction. The interaction is effective for both male and female candidates, though there are differences in some stages of the Innerworld polar relationships, due to the gender of the physical body.

Due to the rapidity of the Shortened Way, preparation is very important before embarking upon the Journey. If unprepared, the physical body, our slowest rate of expression, will take a long period of time to reattune to the



innermost transformations. This is the individual Key to the disease of the Fisher King; there are imbalances in the blood, untransmuted poisons, when the body and the spirit are separated. As this is our common lot, we seek to cure it; but magical work will amplify and express this imbalance in a manner relative to the motive and strength of the magician. On a higher level, this is the Key to the duality of the mysterious Grail Castle.

The teachings and symbols of our primal tradition are the hallowed means of preparation for the Journey, coupled to a heart that truly seeks to know Truth within.

One of the main targets of suppression was the occurrence of group contact with Innerworld Mysteries, the systems originally taught by the ancients, and later intensified by the revelation which is claimed as the foundation of Christianity. There are circumstances in which a true spiritual or originative power may come right through into the outer world; to some this is a beautiful and satisfying experience, to others it is terrifying and inconceivable. The Grail, which manifests all of these qualities was originally the Vessel of the Dark Mother, called Cerridwen.<sup>19</sup> If we consider the linear or harmonic structure of the Archetypes, we find the following:

1. Unknown Origination.
2. The Dark Mother: Cerridwen.
3. The Son of Light: Jesus, Melkizadek, Bel.
4. The Light Mother — the Instructress: Venus, Athena, Brigit.
5. The Mother of Nature: the Moon and Earth Goddesses.

On the Tree of Life each Female Aspect is balanced through the central role of the Son of Light, by a Male Aspect shown as the Right Hand Pillar. The most glaring inaccuracy on the Tree as shown in modern texts is that the Fifth Sphere is usually attributed to a male warlike entity, symbolized as Mars, behind which is the Power of Taking. This Sphere is in fact, Feminine, and is of the Left Hand Pillar, acting as a bridge of pure catabolic power between the Dark Mother and the Light or Instructing Mother.

In Celtic lore, She is the Morrigan, the Red Bird of Battles,

the active power of Death and Breakdown. Examination of the polarities shown on our Tree of Life illustration on page 147 will be helpful in understanding these relationships.

Having dealt at length with the background and origin of the UnderWorld Tradition, we arrive at a stage in our analysis where we break off from the analysis of the Threefold Tree.

When presenting potent symbolic material, the final stages are difficult to express in written form. The chapter on the third and Universal Tree is given later, after specific details and encounters of the Journey and Initiation have been discussed.

The Universal Tree may only be experienced direct, so words are of little value other than as loose instructions upon the way. The Qabalistic Tree, used widely by modern students is inadequately represented, as it seldom includes operational instructions for the transformative stages of the First and Second Trees.

Before attempting a Journey, or any approach to the Third Tree, there are three aspects of the Tradition which must be elucidated:

1. The Black Crow. The Taking Powers of the UnderWorld.
2. The Guardian and the Guide. The Stewards of the UnderWorld.
3. The Summoning of the Ancestors. Remembering the Future.

Some examples of these magical encounters are given in the appendices, and will repay careful study and experiment.

Let us first, like the old alchemists and their predecessors the pagan Heroes, seek the advent of the Black Crow.

## 5.

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# The Power of Taking

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In the UnderWorld Tradition, and esoteric teachings generally, the Negative Power, that of catalysis or breakdown, is symbolized by an anthropomorphic female form. This form acts as a vehicle for the Power of Taking, and may be expressed as a goddess image, a spontaneous construct of consciousness, or even temporarily as a human woman. We are especially concerned with this Power mediated by Innerworld beings, and certain orders or types of being are closely involved with the old Mysteries of dynamic interaction between human and environment.

The form of the Taking Power may assume various guises, both beautiful and hideous. It is clear that the range of pagan goddesses and Christian myth-women such as Mary the Virgin, or Mary of Magdala, all partake of the nature of this Female Archetype. Once again, we are not discussing an archetype in the modern psychological sense; *an Archetype is a Matrix or key Image which gives shape and direction to energies arising out of the Primal source of all being.*

Modern astronomy has shown us the physical expressions of such Matrices in the vast spiral shapes of distant galaxies, while physics reveals patterns upon the most fundamental atomic levels. These material reflections of Archetypal Matrices (long understood by the Ancients in the pure shapes of the Platonic solids) offer us exterior clues to our interior consciousness; and in non-scientific cultures an equally perceptive model of both macroscopic and

microscopic Nature was found through Inward cognition. It is this mode of cognition which offers us the glyph of the Tree of Life, a topological model which expresses not only stellar, planetary or atomic relationships, but modes of polarity in human relationships and individual awareness.<sup>1</sup>

A specific Archetype, such as the Female Power, will vary in expression according to the degree of individual perception; yet it is a continual vessel and interface for the energies that it symbolizes and moulds. By interaction with such an Archetype, a human applicant may intentionally alter his or her awareness. In this context, magical systems have adopted the use of the Four Archangels from Gnostic ritual, but they are only one model of expression of the Four Quarters of the Wheel of Life.<sup>2</sup>

The Female Archetype should not be readily confused with the potent goddesses who are imaginative manifestations of the Power, and may also express energy through certain animals and birds. In modern studies of the subject, such creatures are usually called 'totem beasts'. We find them in myth, folktale, early literature, song, and in heraldry, where some of the magical significance has been retained through extreme conservatism. They are also present in an attenuated form in illuminated manuscripts, as zoomorphic designs or letters; in this context they are the vestigial remains of a glyphic alphabet now lost, and probably retained by scribes only through traditional artistic convention.<sup>3</sup>

The totem beasts include the Pig, the Cow, the Owl, the Hound, the Heron and the Crow. When such beasts appear in a tale or song, they may be derived from early pagan sources; we have ample evidence of this derivation from Irish, Welsh and French examples in medieval literature deriving from oral sources. Such examples compare favourably with classical mythology and archaeological remains, offering us a firm, if fragmentary, picture of the widespread representation of magical animals and birds. From the medieval romance to the alchemical texts and works that proliferated in various forms up to the eighteenth century, the totem beasts appear in descriptive or pictorial representation. After the eighteenth century, they seem to

have been abandoned, and so do not appear in modern occult books, or in recent Christian Qabalistic or Hermetic works other than those on alchemy. Only alchemy has retained the totem beast symbolism inherited from earlier cultures, and pre-literate visualization is the basis of an alchemical 'alphabet'.<sup>4</sup>

The purely oral ballads and songs with which we are particularly concerned contain a number of totem beasts. These beasts may be connected to primitive Celtic sources, to reveal a symbolic bridge as aspects of pagan gods and goddesses, or other Innerworld beings. In the folklore material, most totem beasts appear alone, but in the early texts (deriving from oral traditions), the transformations of Goddess to Beast are explicitly stated or arranged in such a way that their interconnection is apparent.<sup>5</sup>

The significance of totem beasts in alchemy has received very little serious attention, yet it gives insight into the enduring traditions that alchemy embodied, and suggests the oral and implied ambience of alchemical literature, which we have referred to above.

In pagan myth and legend, certain essentially Celtic and pre-Celtic (chthonic 'British') goddesses are linked to the Crow. This Triple Female Archetype, known in Irish tales as the Morrigan, has the control of both the battlefield and of sexual congress. She is powerful in both Giving and Taking, a bringer of Life and Death — not because She is a duality or entity of conflict, but because both Giving and Taking are emitted from a Third source or state which is within the UnderWorld. The Morrigan appears as a Beauty, as a thirsty drinker of blood in female form, as a hag or Crone, and also as a Crow.<sup>6</sup>

Regrettably, we find that totem beasts have been rationalized in literature. They are usually interpreted as the imaginative products of primitive observation (e.g. crows frequent battlefields, therefore crows are the birds of the war god). This simplistic explanation, typical of modern symbolists, falls far short of the true meaning and application of the totem beast. There is an interplay between the creature, its name and its attributes, which is one of the basic and vital root patterns of all magical and religious symbolism. The ludicrous application of simple logic to

symbolic keys that derive from levels far deeper than mere rationalization often leads to the assumption that if an image is Labelled, it is therefore Understood.

Perhaps the most absurd culmination of this absurd line of reasoning is the school of psychology which maintains that physical orgasm is sought as a substitution for cessation of consciousness — that sexual climax equates with physical death.<sup>7</sup> Ancient symbols of the goddess are frequently paraded forth as proof of such nonsense; but a materialist approach cannot unravel the weavings of magical concepts. The limits set upon the field of survey are too small, falling far short of the true realm of exploration, as if the psychologists have judged 'thus far shall we rationalize and no further', and like the believers in a flat Earth, dare not make any voyage of exploration that might disturb the self-interest.

The issue of the Fear of Death is inherent in the science of psychology: the psychologist is one who fears death, and who makes his living (like his forerunners the Christian priests) out of our fear of death. This rigid boundary of fear cuts off and imprisons all schools of interpretation or therapy, turning them back upon themselves in endless narcissistic recession.

The materialist fear of death is derived from the orthodox religious conditioning programme, which ruled that each individual only had one life in which to qualify for Heaven or Hell. The core of this theme, coercion, reappears in our atheistic culture in many forms, particularly those of hedonism and irresponsibility on a planetary scale. If we only have one life, and do not believe in any kind of god, we can behave in any way we wish! And so we seek cessation, through burning up either our personal energies in trivial pursuits, or in burning up the planet and its life in a nuclear holocaust. Our apparent free will in these matters is that same coercion applied by the Christian authorities: the fear of death.

The implications of the older universal viewpoint, in which there are many lives, many worlds, are not confined to mere crude acceptance of rebirth or invisible beings. There are ramifications of the magical attitude within the individual that make group suppression, even by force of

arms, almost impossible to maintain.

Paradoxically, it is the false fear of death that leads to wanton destruction, while the acknowledgement of the unknown extension of life is intimately linked to a love of the land and all living beings. The Mysteries, however, take one further impossible step, for they teach that we are whatever we imagine ourselves to be; for all creation is shaped by imaginative Archetypes.

Modern occultism and witchcraft, emerging rather coyly into public view after years of political suppression and persecution, have been concerned with a renewed awareness of the Wheel of Life, Death and Rebirth. This employs the flow of the Seasons and an integration within modern awareness of patterns utilized by the ancestors. Valuable as it is, this is the merest beginning of the reinstatement of magic as an art of self-knowledge attuned to greater consciousness.

The major aim of magic was to leap across the Wheel, to find a secret Way out of the endless cycles and spirals. Initiates in the classical or Ancient Mysteries were taught Not To Forget; for forgetting, or self-willed limitation, leads to repetition of cycles.<sup>8</sup> This applies in the personal psyche just as it applies in the entire life-pattern or in a series of lives. The magical key to the link between sexual attraction and death is at the root of this relationship.

Modern interpretation of symbols, such as that offered by psychology, can only cover one obvious revolution of the personal wheel. This limitation, which can be understood in the light of the social and intellectual background to developing psychology, has nevertheless generated the unfortunate parasitic link between psychology and astrology. The psychic map was originally employed as an analogy of deeper levels of consciousness, and true astrology relies on subtle cognition arising from contemplation of the relationship shown, not from rule-of-thumb interpretation.

The Power of Taking, the pagan Goddess of death/life by any name or image, was not the power that turned the Wheel of Life. She did not have the role of *dea ex machina*, but was and is the Spindle, the Hub, and the mediator of the Secret Way, the Power in which they are merged as one.

A human entity is composed of the Four Elements in

relationship, the spinning of the Wheel, and to seek a deeper resolution of the life and consciousness cycle, we must first achieve dissolution, self-destruction. This willed disintegration can be gained on several levels, ranging from the superficial mask of the personality through to the composition of the body cells. While changes of the first order are fairly easy to initiate, the second and opposite polarity of physical translation or regeneration is a rarity. The prime mythic example is found in the Christian Resurrection, but we have lesser variants in the form of people who physically disappear into other worlds, or in the case of medically confirmed reversions of incurable conditions such as cancer.

The transformations are effectively symbolized by various changes of shape found in the traditional lore, and may be reinstated with fresh interpretation and practical experiment based upon imaginative visualization and interaction.

To logically equate the Crow with battlefields, or sexual climax with death, may indeed be sufficient for theories heavily influenced by centuries of orthodox Jewish or Christian dogma, now flourishing as materialism and atheism. Yet the Power of Taking is essential to all life, all transformation, and even the fumbling psychological theorists have grasped this truth while degrading it to their own level of expression.

The purpose of the life-death power, which is outwardly epitomized by sexual intercourse for both males and females, is to generate Change. The aim of genuine initiation is to replace the endless dance of changes with a small number of chosen and far-reaching alterations that subsume the random energies. The end result is said to be an alteration of the world, a liberation that embraces not only the individual, but resonates through humankind and the planet itself. It is for this reason, and in understanding of this power, that one of the Major Symbols of the Western Mysteries is the Sword. Once the cut of liberation has been made, redemption and restitution are received through recreation; hence the Cup or Grail which is another of the Major Symbols. This truth is expressed in the New Testament in a most effective manner, in Matthew 10:34, and following verses.



In our pursuit of the Black Crow, we must concern ourselves not only with the nature of the Goddess who takes the corvine shape, but with that most magical of themes, the meaning of Names. The etymology of the words *Corvus* and *Corpus* is an interesting example of magical generation of word relationship. It must not be confused with 'word play' or 'unconscious association', for these mental phenomena occur within the individual psyche at a relatively superficial level. The origin of certain words (some would say of all words) rests with potent creative patterns which are the shared property of large groups, related through environment, culture and Innerworld contact.

In practical magic, words have a traditional significance which should not be underestimated. Once again, we find that literal interpretation has been foisted upon this significance, obscuring its value.

One of the major and most popular features of published occult practices is the concept of the Word of Power. Some magical groups, attuned to formal state religion or Hebrew orthodoxy, demand that the Words are, and can only be, the Jewish Christian 'Name of God'. This nonsense has been prevalent in occultism for so long that it has acquired a spurious weight of its own, compounded with a glamorous gloss of secrecy, mystification and blatant ignorance posing as hierarchical authority. But it does all derive from genuine magical roots, and the religious Names at least carry the power of belief derived from thousands of faithful worshippers, most of whom nowadays are dead.

Modern occultism has tried to break away from some of the more orthodox or meaningless Words of Power, often with dire results. At least one respected modern authority upon ritual magic teaches us that words have to be invested, that their potency has to be imposed upon them, stuffed into them by the effort of the operator and would-be magician.<sup>9</sup>

Thus at one extreme we have those who firmly believe that magic may only be worked through application of the god-names of a Middle-Eastern tribal confederacy, while at the other we have those who teach that words are not essentially magical, but must be forcibly rendered so by the muscle of human awareness. Both sides lament that the Art

is so frequently derided by intelligent commentators.

The advent of the Black Crow in alchemy is a further development of the carrion crow who haunted the battlefields of ancient wars. The Crow is the Totem Beast of the Goddess of Death, breaking down the body that the spirit might be released. In our alchemical context, it is often described or shown in pictorial form as one of the stages of Transmutation. It means black and putrefying matter, and may be referred to the matter of the psyche as much as to that of the dead physical body.

The relationship between Corvus and Corpus should be magically apparent. A good illustration of this Advent is shown in *Philosophia Reformata*, Mylius 1622.<sup>10</sup>

Long before the alchemical expositions were published, the crow was featured in oral tradition, and is closely linked to the prototypical symbolism of the Grail mythology. In the *Mabinogion*, the Celtic God-King Bran derives his name from the word for raven; he is of gigantic size, potent in battle, and is the possessor of a Cauldron of Immortality.

In the ballad 'The Twa Corbies', two crows or ravens feast upon the body of a new slain knight. His Hawk, his Hound and his Fair Lady have all left him:

And o'er his banes when they are bare  
The wind sall blaw for ever mair.<sup>11</sup>

Here we find the primal battle-crow within the dreamlike courtly context, which is actually a timeless construct, although superficially medieval in style. The ravens speak to one another, deriding the futility of mortal aspiration. They are not, therefore, literal scavengers, but the Totem Beasts of the Taking Power. In the heroic Irish tales, they were a manifestation of the Goddess. This is reflected in their use of the Knight's body for food and for nesting materials: upon the Wheel of Life nothing is lost; all is rearranged.

The knights and ladies whom we shall encounter repeatedly in our examples are a curious mixture of utterly pagan magical attributes, combined with the courtly medieval sentiments; but the plots show little of these courtly elements other than as a gloss, or an enabling feature for the primal actions to arise.

The world of the oral ballad and folk talk, particularly that of the ballad, is the model for combined pagan-Christian legends that emerged into literature as the Grail cycle.

The knight appears again in the 'Corpus Christi Carol' in a wounded condition; he is one and the same as the Maimed Fisher King of the Grail Castle, as Bran of the Pierced Thighs, the Celtic UnderWorld god. The dead or dying knight in the ballads, the Celtic myths and tales, the Grail literature, and the alchemical texts in which a King is mortified or cut to pieces, are all aspects of the same state of consciousness. This state is not merely a psychic or mental definition; it runs through all existence, from basic matter and energy to the immense organizations of stellar bodies. All, in the magical view of the worlds, are conscious in a wide variety of modes.

The wounded or dying knight or King reveals a pattern consistent in human symbolism from prehistoric times to the present day; beginning with primal ancestor worship and sacrifice of blessed victims, developing in the great civilizations such as Rome and slowly becoming a rigid aspect of state control. The Christian religion revitalized the myth with a most potent revelation that eventually swept through the Western psyche, becoming in its turn fossilized and inflexible through human lust for power. The pagan streams of this tradition, however, remained in a fragmentary but evergreen condition, appearing repeatedly in folklore and song, in esoteric manuscripts and texts, and in the Hermetic publications which derived from classical metaphysics fused with numerous other sources.

The pattern is not a mere rationalization or explanation of the human condition, but is one specific mode of the transformation which occurs during the UnderWorld Initiation.

Approach to the UnderWorld, entry therein, and the passage through its various realms may be understood as an overall magical operation: the Secret Way across the Wheel of Life. It is marked by the appearance of the Tree of Life in three revelatory aspects, and is under the especial tutelage of the Archetypical Female who is the Matrix for the goddesses of death/life.

Within this framework, the individual is shown as the Knight or Lady who undergoes the transformations,

illnesses, deaths and rebirths enumerated by the Seven Stages upon the Tree.

The pagan myths, the medieval romances and the Hermetic texts all offer the same method of development, albeit with different emphases according to their cultural background. The central transformation has become lost to modern occultism and psychology alike; it cannot be activated without enclosure within the Wheel of Life as a retaining Vessel, nor can it be fulfilled without moving to a deeper level of consciousness by taking the UnderWorld Journey.

To bring the various Keys to life, literary examples of the Secret Tradition must be combined with the oral branch and activated by the methods of ritual magic which produced them both. The root, the branch, and the vessel within which the abstruse symbols are simmered to produce their essence, cannot be found in literature. It is the oral tradition that retains these elements, and not the juvenile 'Orders' which lay false claims to esoteric authority and power. If the truth of our essential nature is not held within the shared consciousness of every man and woman, where else may it be found?

## 6.

# The Guardian and the Guide

### **The Roles of Guardian and Guide**

During the analysis of the Black Crow, or catalytic action of consciousness, we touched upon the confused equation of sexual climax with cessation of awareness. This terror of the powers of death in life, driving us blindly around the wheel of our false personalities, is often referred to in modern occult texts as the 'Guardian' or the 'Dweller Upon the Threshold'.

Both Guardian and Guide are essential characters in the Mysteries, and may appear in varying forms. As we shall discover, these forms are more complex and specific than the general definition given above. Insufficient distinction has been made between the two types of being and their functions; a basic definition might be made that while the Guardian may also be a Guide, a Guide is never a Guardian. This will become clear as we examine the evidence, for the Guardian is a higher order of Innerworld being than the Guide, yet may offer guidance as an aspect of its guardianship.

Before proceeding, it must be made clear that the Guardian and Guides referred to are not in any way similar to those entities in modern spiritualism which bear the same titles, such as 'spirit guides' or 'guardian angels'. These cosy nursery school entities play no part in the UnderWorld Tradition, if indeed they exist at all.

The Guardian is the more significant of the two functions and classes of being that may be encountered in the Innerworlds, and we will consider it first. Although the overall definition of the Guardian is symbolic, it must always be remembered that in magic there are various entities, living beings, who epitomize the function of guardianship to the would-be initiate. It is a common error to approach Innerworld Guardians as being 'only symbols'; many of the problems that arise from magical work derive from the folly of treating self-willed powerful beings as mere cyphers or automatic functions. As the degree of awareness of such beings increases, so it is increasingly dangerous to approach them as stereotypes, particularly while in the role of ignorant Traveller.

Beyond a certain and attainable level or degree of awareness, life does not retain recognizable imaginative patterns. In other words, the image of the Guardian is a response generated within the individual psyche, and the same Guardian may appear in a number of different symbolic forms to different people. In group workings these imaginative forms tend to cohere and become unified.

Beings that have forms unknown to human imagination may intentionally stimulate an image or stereotyped model for purposes of communication. This method provides us with a key to the trivialities of spiritualism, for they are no more nor less than that which the medium can understand readily. On a more effective level, Innerworld teachers may assume a visual form, perceived in the imagination, which is human or historically ambient; they may also appear to the seer as symbolic entities indicating role and function. The first category includes images of ancestors, kings, priests and famous individuals; while the second includes god and goddess forms, hieratic roles indicated by specific colours weapons or symbols, mathematical or geometric shapes, or simply repeated glyphic patterns. Both categories merge into one another, and both partake of other forms, such as god images, which also act as independent matrices of consciousness.

Despite this prolific changing of shape, which is no more than we should expect of a protean tradition, certain areas may be defined and employed in practice. In many cases,

we will find that the Innerworld beings are exactly what they seem to be, and that worrying about their true shape or nature is less important than actually reacting to their presence.

The Guardian may manifest in the imagination as a deity with a clear cultural historical context; as a pan-cultural being of anthropomorphic appearance; or as a cult animal or Totem Beast. In some important examples the image is a combination of theriomorphic and anthropomorphic forms.

If we consider the totem animals and monstrous creatures that play important roles in oral tradition, they comprise two groups of guardianship. The first is that of creatures that are mythical, with no parallel animal in the outer world. The second is of creatures that are natural, or are gigantic or unusual variants of natural animals.

The list of Totem Beasts which manifest in nature is long. In the Western tradition, the following are particularly important: the Hound or Dog; the Pig or Boar; the Hawk or Eagle; the Crow or Raven; the Ram or Ewe; the Goat; the Deer or Stag. More mythical creatures are: the Water Horse; the Giant Fish, Serpent or Dragon; the Unicorn; the Gryphon; the Basilisk; the Lion and Leopard. Some of the second category appear through the influx of oriental lore during the Middle Ages, and were maintained in heraldry.

The magical animals that participate in the Four Quarters of general magical lore are drawn from oriental Gnostic or Christian and Hebrew sources: the Eagle, the Lion, the Bull, and the Man or Fish.

In the Western Tradition, the animals are: the Stag of the East; the Horse of the South; the Dun Cow of the West; and the Bear of the North. Needless to say, none of these attributes, Eastern or Western, are fixed and rigid. Both the Hawk and the Bull, for example, play essential roles in magical imagery derived from Celtic tradition, though we might add that the Hawk sits upon the antlers of the Stag, while the Bull and the Bear pull the Plough between them.

To regard a totem animal as emblematic of natural qualities is the most preliminary mode of interpretation. While such an approach may be useful to heraldry, or basic symbolic education, the deeper functions active in magic are more subtle and complicated.

The magical context of animals may be historical, mythical, archaeological in preservation, as embodiments of oral or transcribed ancient lore, or within a full magical ceremony where the creatures are seen with the Inner vision. Before moving to detailed examples, we must first consider the language of magical symbols, for such beasts are an important and neglected part of that language.

Only through a basic grasp of the animal, human and god or goddess forms as a communicative alphabet can we approach the great figure of the Guardian, who combines all of these attributes into one potent magical Name. Each of the lesser beings, guides or guardians, makes up a letter of this Name — a Name which is realized through inner cognition, and not through teaching, literature or religion.

The language of magic is not linear; it is not made up of coherent directional units which may be assembled to unite as larger whole structures. This standard alphabetic approach to language has been used in analogy in magical writing and teaching, and although the analogy holds good, it must be treated with discretion and reservation.

Misunderstanding of the concept has led to a great deal of wasted effort, particularly in the continuing attempts to place 'alphabets' upon the Paths of the Tree of Life. This method has never been a working proposition, as it is divorced from its Hebrew cultural background by several removes, and can hardly have applied to Western symbolism at any time. Yet it occupies the intellect of great esoteric scholars, visionaries and polymaths, from whom the lesser modern occult writers have copied without question or understanding.

When we find alphabetic patterns arising in the works of a genius such as Athanasius Kircher<sup>1</sup> we are being offered *conceptual models*, in which the literal values are far less important than the archetypal patterns. This expression of models or modes of thought runs through the great Hermetic works, and flowered in its Hebrew expression as the Holy Alphabet. As we shall discover, the Western consciousness has a holy alphabet of its own, but not derived from the characters of writing that are beloved of pan-cultural theosophists. This magical alphabet is made up of units of symbolism that take imaginative form, and the forms



are expressed in fragmentary examples through the many streams of magical traditions available to us today.

As with all magical art, there is a paradox; once the magician has truly attuned to the power of magical names or words, it is possible to operate alphabetic spells, in which unique words are created from letters which attune to modes of consciousness. But this does not work through rote learning, dogmatic lists of correspondences, or the assumption of exotic languages and letters from other cultures.

Magical language is composed of concentrated units, which may be broken down into large numbers of separate components. Superficially this seems equal to our written alphabetic system, but the analogy soon dissolves.

The magician has to learn how to hear and understand whole Words, which are key symbolic units, or streams of exchangeable awareness, before the smaller Units or Letters can be deciphered and separated. As magic is derived from a non-literate consciousness, it works in exactly the same manner as oral learning and tradition; the language is absorbed and rendered active through experience alone. Analytical or intellectual division and re-creation appear as later stages of the refined system.

Magic, therefore, can never be learned from books, no matter how effective they might be as examples of elucidation, preservation, encouragement or dissemination. Magic is not an art or science that depends upon literacy or numeracy, for it is generated at levels of awareness that both precede and transcend these functions.

The magical levels of awareness, which are the transformative levels, are present both in the individual and in a culture generally. If we delve deep enough, we find that they are a property of the consciousness of humankind worldwide, but this great truth is often abused and used as a means of confusing those who have not yet outgrown their cultural and environmental heritage. It is the imposition of world-views that leads to religious persecution and holy wars; in the Mysteries and in the enduring esoteric traditions, we transcend our cultural heritage by fully assimilating it at its most dynamic; this is the nature of the UnderWorld Initiation.

In a historical context we find ample evidence of growth of magical lore through an oral tradition, the non-literate wisdom of our Ancestors. This equates individually to the non-literate or pre-literate consciousness within. Numeracy, likewise, has both an oral and a written mode of operation; the higher mathematics being less 'numerate' than the lower intellectual written forms.<sup>2</sup>

The transcendent levels of non-literate and non-numerate consciousness are higher octaves of the lower collective levels; they work according to the laws of spiralling harmonics, which play a major role in magical operations.

An effective application of literacy and numeracy can only be made after knowledge and understanding of the fundamental and transcendent levels has been gained. Intellectual or rational approaches to magic are always dismal failures.

An animal, in the context of magical language, may operate in several different ways. Such a beast is seldom restricted to one superficial meaning and function. To demonstrate this, we can use the Pig as an example.

The Pig appears in myth, representation in art, folklore, and to the inner vision during meditation or ritual; it is a Totem Beast. But its appearance does not merely suggest pig-like qualities. The positive qualities are strength, fruitfulness, prolific source of meat, cunning in self-preservation, power of the herd or group, a great mother instinct, the courage of the boar; all of the Pig qualities are expressions of natural energies flowing through active animal forms.

The manifest Pig, physical or imaginative, is the focal point of a wide series of connections, a series which opens out as we pursue them further into the Innerworld. Such a Pursuit, like the great boar hunts of ancient legend, has an analogical function.<sup>3</sup> By following the symbolic connections inwardly, we also follow their development in reverse order through serial time. The further 'In' that a symbol is pushed or pursued, the further 'Back' are the results in cultural and historical terms.

There is a point at which this process stops, where the two streams of historical/cultural perspective, and inward cognition, merge together.<sup>4</sup> From this point of union, they

translate to an altogether different level of awareness; the state from which both initially devolved. This devolution in serial time is expressed through the human race, while in the individual it is expressed through the current life pattern. The dual mode of symbolism, working according to the laws of harmonics mentioned above, is clearly shown in the astrological analogy, where the Twelve Houses and Signs are not only indicative of the matrices within which the individual operates, but also of historic Ages and group qualities.

The Pig was one of the major UnderWorld creatures of the ancients. Believed to have appeared from the secret gaps or crevices that led into the mysterious Earth, the herd of swine was the collective animal of the dark gods and goddesses. Yet the Pig was also the great gift from the UnderWorld, stolen by a Hero, carried off to bless humanity above with the fruitfulness of the herd.<sup>5</sup>

The Pig was intelligent, easy to domesticate, clean (for the theme of the 'dirty pig' only applies to callous modern animal husbandry) and a model of family or tribal unity. Yet the wild Boar was a formidable challenge and a deadly opponent. This duality of the Totem Beast is extremely important, for it represents not only the alternating aspects of the psychic energies within, but the deeper alternation of light and dark qualities emitted by the Goddess or Dark Female in the UnderWorld. In the tales that involve the Dragon, in its dual form of White and Red, the secret earth-energies are symbolized.

In Celtic culture, the pig was the food of Heroes, and joints of pork feature as gifts to the blessed dead, the Ancestors.<sup>6</sup> The collective entity of the Herd, and its connection with the UnderWorld and death, leads us at last to the Keeper. He is that mysterious male figure who is repeatedly found in various forms as Lord of the Animals.

The Keeper, or Guardian, combines the lowest and highest roles. He is a vagabond wanderer and servant, yet he is the key preserver of food, health, and benefit. In some variants of the theme, he is a prince or king or hero partaking of a trial or magical labour; and he is led by the swine to a magical place, the Gate of the UnderWorld. In this theme, we are being shown the guardian and traveller within ourselves.<sup>7</sup>

When the Pig appears as a wild Boar or Sow, it is often in giant form, and is pursued into a dark and terrible Forest. When cornered, this Pig transforms into an anthropomorphic being, who grants wishes, gives advice, and distributes magical gifts and blessings.

In either variant, that which commenced as the tame or wild pig leads to a revelation or epiphany. The Pig is the beast of the Goddess of the UnderWorld, and it is to her, by certain well-defined but difficult and dangerous pathways, that the pig will lead us. The Paths may differ, but the totem animal and the final confrontation remain the same. Truth lies not in looking at the Totem Beasts, or in interpretation of their presence, but in pursuing them, in meeting the challenge that their Keeper offers, and in passing on to the deeper experience of encountering their Owner.<sup>8</sup>

The Pig, therefore, in magical language, is not to be suppressed or labelled as an animal that roots in the ground, and was associated with earth powers because of its digging instinct!

Not all animals in our living alphabet of images lead to the Dark Female Archetype. Peaceful creatures such as the Cow, the Dove, the Heron, the Dog (but definitely not the Hound) act as Guides to powers of fruitfulness, gentle erotic joy, passage through middleground, as leaders through temporary wilderness, and so forth.

In traditional ballads, such Guides are found not only in a typical pagan religious context, but also in a much simpler and more primitive aspect, linked directly to the phantoms of the dead, as in the Tree-Soul motif analysed in Chapter 4.

Birds, Butterflies, Flies, Mice and other small creatures serve in this manner, and are the origin of the rather despicable pseudo-Fairy images that appeared in the nineteenth century in literature. They are actually the heralds of passing life, of transit from one realm to another; sometimes they were seen as emblems of the soul as it left the physical body upon death. They were also intermediary beings through which the dead might speak to the living, and some of the apparently meaningless art of augury was derived from this concept. In the ballads where the dead speak through the mouths of the blessed creatures, birds disclose murder and fishes sing.<sup>9</sup>

The benign guardians and guides often lead us into true Christian symbolism (generally called pagan-Christian). The Cow is the creature of the Celtic goddess Bride or Briggida, later called Saint Brigit. In both Ireland and Scotland, and in parts of England, this widespread female power image was retained in popular use well into the twentieth century, and she is still found as a Catholic Saint.

Bride was a young goddess; she hung her cloak upon the rays of the Sun, she radiated Light; she was midwife to the Virgin Mary. It was Bride who washed the Son of the Virgin in the Rich Fermented Milk of the Cow.

The Cow, in the form of the Dun Cow, is famous in tradition for feeding a multitude during famine, and there are some early carvings of Bride milking the Cow into a bucket or cauldron. The ancient belief that Bride was midwife to the Virgin Mary is essential matter for meditation if you seek to understand the Celtic and Christian enlightenment.

In this context, we should remember that the Virgin was advised of her conception by the Archangel Gabriel, according to oriental Christian tradition. This Archangel guards the West of the Magical Circle or Wheel of Life, and his implement is the Horn, in the form of a drinking, hunting, or phallic horn from a cow. Through time and sophistication (to say nothing of obfuscation) the Horn has been amended to the Trumpet, and to the Trumpet-shaped Lily.<sup>10</sup> More important, Gabriel may also hold the Cup or Chalice, which is ultimately the Vessel of The Grail, as is the Horn. This vessel appeared from the UnderWorld in oral tradition, and is of course the bucket or cauldron into which Bride milks the Cow to sustain man from (spiritual) famine.

The key symbols are cross-fertilized, not because they are all substitutions for sexual organs as some modern schools of mental therapy would insist, but because they emerge from the same creative consciousness that makes the matrix for our gender while in the physical body. This appears to us as the collective imagination, which has higher and lower cycles or harmonics, each merging into the other. The magical teachings are clear upon the subject; we must encounter and be transformed by the lower cycles before we are able to relate truly to the higher octaves. The Christian myth precedent is in the Descent to Hell (the UnderWorld) of Jesus Christ.

Once again, an apparently simple totem animal, the Cow, has led us to the most beloved of the ancient culture goddesses, and through Her role as midwife to the Son of Light, on towards the secret core of the Christian Mystery. The web of symbolism has many elements in common with Egyptian and Eastern mythologies, but is not necessarily derived from them, for symbolism of this sort is a spontaneous reaction within the group imagination. The transition from the simple fertility mystery to the greater Mystery lies in our naming of the stars; for we use the words Milky Way, or Galaxy, to describe the outpouring of the great Goddess across the Arch of Heaven. We shall encounter the Horn once again, where it is used not for physical or stellar fertility or sustenance, but as the implement that summons the souls of the dead, the Ancestors, to the Wild Hunt.

While the above is a summary of the symbols that can be supported in many ways by archaeological and literary evidence, there is a further level of interpretation, which is taught by the esoteric tradition. If we add the Bull to our sequence of bovine symbolism, we find the garbled but important stories of the lost continent of Atlantis, derived from Plato and from obscure verbal and literary sources which are often drawn from experiences of seership.<sup>11</sup>

The Bull was the Totem Beast employed in the rituals of lost Atlantis, and was closely attuned to the god form described by the Greeks as Poseidon. In this respect, we should remember that classical writers named the gods and goddesses by Greek or Roman names according to their function. The use of Greek or Latin god-names in classical writing does not imply the actual employment of the Greek or Latin form in a foreign land, merely that the deity concerned was similar in many respects to the classical form named. Variants of Bull magic appear in the ancient lore of Ireland, in the remains of the Cretan civilization, and of course in prehistoric cave paintings.

The esoteric tradition, which is partially drawn from literature and partially from oral sources and seership, has continually maintained that refugees from Atlantis made their way to Britain, where they planted the roots of a new culture which spread over Europe from the Western seaboard.

The early Celtic Christian Church was well established with a succession of its own, long before the state church of Rome came to 'convert' the British. Celtic Christianity is said to have drawn support from Druidism, and to have co-existed with the old religions in Britain; the general atmosphere of tolerance that is shown by British pagan remains and Roman-Celtic inscriptions would support such a view. The Druids in Irish tales are said to have been conversant with the advent of Christ, though such material is likely to be monastically influenced; and the Gaulish deity Esus, certainly a Druid god, was a Hanged Man. Traditionally, the great Saint Columba was a pagan Druid convert, and the Celtic Church persistently retained older forms that linked to pagan usage, and curious practices which extend not only in time, but also into the UnderWorld.

One more fragment of curious lore remains to be added to the sequence, and we shall have spelt a complete magical Word.<sup>12</sup> It is said that Jesus spent his 'missing years' (those not accounted for in the edited gospels) as a youth, in the West of England, at what is now Glastonbury. This interesting myth, which has no historical basis, is supported by monastic writings which claim to describe the founding of the Glastonbury Abbey, and by a collection of West Country folk tales that repeatedly affirm that Jesus spent his childhood in the region, though some of these extend as far West as Cornwall. In Celtic tradition, Brigit was the midwife of Mary at the birth of Jesus; and it is her image, milking the Dun Cow, that is carved upon the ruined tower of St Michael's Church, watching over the pagan hill of Glastonbury Tor. The Archangel Michael is set over the Tor for a very good reason, for it is one of the Gateways to the UnderWorld, and its dark ruler is Gwyn ap Nudd, Lord of the Wild Hunt.

The sequence of connected symbols and tales given above may not be acceptable to the literal-minded modern reader; yet magical lore spans long periods of outer or serial time, acting as a sequence of matrices within which so-called 'real' events manifest. This is one of the important differences between the ancient use of symbols and the modern; psychology tries to interpret symbols, but magic *lives through* symbols, causing them to energize the human

awareness, and by so doing enables the symbols to change the outer world.

The first area of the outer world that is changed is of course oneself, but in effective magic the catalysis may extend over quite wide areas. The wider the area affected, the more general and unnoticeable the effect will be. Group manifestations such as wars, revolutions and religions, are the result of extremely powerful inner energies making themselves felt through many individuals at once; but these are less likely to be the result of magical workings than of great changes in stellar, planetary and human relationships. The Great War of 1914-1918 was a purgative and destructive outburst that marked the collapse of the old order of European Christianity, with all that the centuries of repressive political religion had created.

### **The Horned Man**

Having considered some of the basic functions of both guardians and guides, we must now approach that Great Guardian of the Western Tradition, the most vilified and misrepresented Being of our culture, and therefore the most important. He is, of course, the Keeper of Animals, the Horned Man.

We can find him in a number of forms, partaking mainly of the element of Earth. He is the Keeper of Gateways, the Hunter, a cross between human and horned beast in appearance. His animal parts are bull, deer or goat.

The Bull is the great strength of the fertile earth, the blood and sinews of the productive land; the Goat is the enduring virility; hence the sayings 'as strong as a bull', 'as stubborn as a goat', 'randy old goat'. Such phrases from popular tradition may change their wordings very slightly over many centuries, but remain true to the magical theme of likening human qualities to animal models. The Deer or Stag is less common nowadays, but phrases such as 'as fleet and nimble as a deer' or 'like a stag in rut' are still understood.

The Hunter and Keeper of the horned animals had to partake of their power, and so adopted their attributes. He was a god to the ancients, in both civilized city-based cultures, and in the looser more primal societies.

Famous Celtic carvings from the Roman period in Gaul



show a powerful male, sitting cross-legged, often with sockets in the head for the addition of real horns. He is sometimes called Cernunos, after a Latin inscription in Gaul, which means 'the horned one'. The famous character of Herne the Hunter derives from the same tradition, still maintained thousands of years after Cernunos was supposedly forgotten, and many places in England bear the name of Cerne, or Cerney.<sup>13</sup>

It is from this pagan deity that the political Christians fabricated their 'devil' or *deo falsus*, drawing upon the classical Pan and the Hebraic *shaitan* or adversary for good measure.

To grasp the full significance of the esoteric traditions, the student must realize that much that was turned to evil by the Christian symbolists was actually quite innocent in nature, and often contained the keys to liberation and to spiritual renewal. It is at this stage of approach to Truth that we must test the Mysteries within ourselves through effort and experience. Trivial notions of good and evil play no part in this process, and must be transcended and neutralized.

Before anathema is brought down upon the author's head and evangelical lynching parties rustled up to seek him out, it must be firmly stated that there is no implicit denial of the existence of malice, evil, corruption and the like. They exist; they must be overcome within us all. The UnderWorld Tradition, like all genuine initiatory traditions, demands a clear, scrupulous morality, with controlled and responsible behaviour both in private and in public. There is no place, no excuse, for childish or indulgent play with the esoteric teachings. Indeed, individual harmony and balance are of prime importance, for without these no magical act can be truly realized. Grace and victory are in the heart or awareness of the individual, not in membership of any official religious cult.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, no intelligent person is likely to accept the childish imagery of 'Satan' or 'evil', or 'black magic'; we live in a world where the potential of realizing and activating evil upon our fellow humans is aided by superb technology. Of what value are the old political suppressive concepts in the light of the nuclear weapon? The horizon of evil has opened out, and we cannot

see the old medieval devil in the distance.

It takes a deeper perception to realize that the old images are still powerful within us, but from a very specialized and highly disguised origin. This imagery was wilfully and immorally poisoned during the formative years of the state-Church in the West, leaving psychological weaponry for later cults and variants of the religion according to their cultural expression. Although our subservience to the perverted imagery is due to ignorance, there can be no doubt that the original twisting and tangling was a series of acts of deliberate will and wisdom. Wisdom is not necessarily compassionate.

The Horned One has been regarded as the focus or source of evil, due to a long conditioning programme which is now wearing thin. To counter this programme, we should not revert to romantic paganism, for this of itself is not sufficient to rebalance the great ill done to our collective mind and soul.

The Guardian of the Gate, the Lord of the Animals, was diminished by the Church, and merged with the Middle-Eastern *shaitan* or adversary. One of the more unfortunate legacies of confusion is the so-called evil attributed to the Left Hand, which was used by the tribal desert people for cleansing purposes after relieving the bowels. It seems unfortunate, to say the least, that an image of profound spiritual depth, such as the Guardian who appears in old Welsh tales or other Celtic sources, should have been wedded to the petty notions of undeveloped tribal nomads. Symbolic perversion and psychic disorientation always occur when the products of one culture are visited upon another through authoritarian channels. This disruptive ferment is still working today, in the form of materialism, capitalism and psychology, destroying the cultures of the East and of the Third World countries in the disguise of 'progress'.

In Christian symbolism, the Horned One was set, correctly, to rule over Hell. The orthodox Hell is merely a rather childish subterfuge, a mask to disguise the true nature of the UnderWorld and to frighten the seeker from looking beyond dogmatic external appearances. The nature of the Guardian is not to capture souls for damnation, but to liberate them from self-imposed restrictions. True hell lives through the illusory values of materialism, in the truly demonic concept of the personality and its so-called integration.

If we relent just a little, we must admit that the orthodox Church was not willing or able to lose this Key Image, the Guardian, entirely. While other pagan gods and goddesses became Saints, this Being resisted, and was cast as the Adversary. We are not dealing with theological or philosophical abstractions in this argument, for they have a rightful place elsewhere. We are referring only to the simple and practical psychology of the ancients, in which images were employed to vitalize and change the inner life. In a discussion of magic within tradition, it is these practical applications that must be brought to light, regardless of the endless argument of duality, or good and evil. Once again, we must be aware that the tradition makes no denial of evil within our hearts; it is intimately concerned with transforming this evil into good, or in religious terms, with the process of Redemption.

Magic is a type of practical and artistic psychology, employing energies of consciousness which are rejected by the modern intellect, but which may be proven through experience. Despite all the suppressive nonsense which has been spouted about the 'Devil', many areas of traditional lore retained the original character of the Guardian. If the regenerative nature of magical images holds true, and is allowed to work, they will always reveal their secret nature to those who ask in the correct manner. We shall return to this matter of questioning the Guardian in a later chapter.

One of the most complex sets of symbols to restore is that of the Guardian and the Left Hand Path or Pillar. Not only was this material corrupted wilfully by religion, but it was also misunderstood by many experts on the esoteric arts and sciences. More culpably, certain writers and teachers have intentionally disguised this set of Keys, for reasons similar to the original mutilation carried out by the churches.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, occult speculation and publication is commonplace to the extent of superficiality. The adepts of the Western Tradition seem unwilling or unable to face up to many obvious aspects of their symbolic heritage, and it is likely that they have insufficient contact with the Keys under discussion.

Some of the orthodox teaching which deals with the Horned One is correct magically, though it has become

dogma rather than practical common sense. The Being should not be worshipped, for he is not a god. This mistake is made by modern witches, who urgently feel the need to rebalance the great loss occasioned by the mutilation of our ancient traditions. The sexual imagery of castration is not used idly in this context, for it is central to the Innermost imagery of the West, in which an infertile and wounded humanity shall be made Whole. As with many magical acts, the mutilation was first carried out in the Innerworlds, and then manifested culturally. This historical process is a small mirror image of the great separation from Archetypical consciousness, known in religion as the Fall from Grace.

As with all magical images, it generates reflections according to social or historical circumstances, but like a hologram, retains the original image from which it derives. The Christian emasculation was enacted upon the Guardian within our consciousness, not to remove his generative powers, but to deprive him of his rightful fertilizing function by perverting his role. Much of the abuse of Woman, and the stereotyping of sexual attitudes derives from this misuse of the Guardian. Once the Goddess has been denied, her main Steward, the Guardian, becomes a being without a balanced role. In other words, to deny the Female is to turn the Male into a potential Devil.

The Horned One is the Arch-Guardian, the Guardian of all guardians who appear within the Tradition. He is not, however, a god who responds to devotion, as does the orthodox image of Christ or of Buddha, or the magical images of Bel, Lugh, Appollo, or Mithras. To worship the Guardian as a god is to misunderstand his function. Worship may have been valid in the past, but the attitude to this Being is already defined by the role that he plays in the wisdom tales such as the *Mabinogion*, where he is respected, feared, challenged and questioned, but not worshipped. This is a magical distinction which must be clear to anyone who takes the UnderWorld Journey, for the worship of Innerworld beings may be undesirable and even dangerous if it is misplaced. As we shall discover, it is in the Name of the Goddess that we can approach the Guardian, for he serves Her as Keeper of her Animals. We must also be aware that he does not partake of the solar nature of the deities, nor

entirely of the UnderWorld nature of the dark gods: he stands between the two.

This boundary-keeping role is a reflection of a greater or macrocosmic function maintained by the great Saviours or Anointed Ones, who stand over the Great Abyss as Bridges. In the case of the Guardian, his role is one of our planet Earth, and more specifically of the Western lands. The Guardian is environmental in his imaginative manifestation, and the Eastern traditions have similar but markedly different guardian beings.<sup>14</sup>

As with most of the magical symbols, the key to the Guardian is found in many examples through the medium of the oral and early written traditions. We understand him by his work, by his function within the wisdom tales and songs, and by direct experience of this function within ourselves. In British and European folklore and legend, he must be defeated in a battle of wits, or occasionally a fight of more violent but no more deadly a nature. It is in this function that we may seek for the true identity and purpose of the image of the Horned One.

On the most crude and simplistic levels, he does indeed represent a fertility power, and this aspect is much favoured by modern revival pagans, who have drawn their advice from the sensational accounts of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century witch trials.

The Goddess appears as a fertility power, but She may also be a virgin or a death-devouring crone; the Guardian has one constant function: to protect. Despite his wildness and savage appearance, he is the archetype of the courtly knight protecting his damsel; these are earthly expressions of the Horned Guardian defending the sacred precincts of the Goddess. The ambiguous sexual attitude of the courtly love of the medieval period is a reflection of the magical interplay defined by the Goddess, the Guardian and the Questing Traveller. These three figures are represented by the beloved, her husband and her courtly lover.

We should not, however, take such parallels in great detail, for the polarities and relationships are as varied as any in human society; there is no firm rule or scale of magical comparison, merely a harmonic similarity. The role of guardian, for example, is frequently played by the lover or

knight, defending honour against a would-be usurper. Once again, it is the function that is important, and not the personality that carries it through.

It may be asked why an Earth Power acts as the Guardian. In mystical and orthodox traditions, the guardians are angelic agencies, far removed in nature from the fallen earth; some never partook of earth at all, hence their role of purity and control. This concept is sufficient for a religion derived from Eastern mysteries, in which the outer world is rejected. Such a rejection, however, is only a compromise between the soul's longing for liberation and the irresolvable problems of the human fall from grace, or web of illusion. The escape into pure realms of consciousness, or even into the state of non-being is one of three choices that we shall meet again within the UnderWorld.

The hidden traditions assert that the Earth or Land is the highest state of all, that in which all conflicts are to be resolved, all actions purified, and all barriers to true enlightenment lifted. All this, if you know how to pass the Guardian.

Earth, the body, the material world, are not rejected or treated as phantasms; they are transformed through an internal death and resurrection, as in the paradigm of the Christ. Although the Christian myth is clearly drawn from the pagan mystery symbolism of the sacred kingship, it also contains a very individual realization of the death, descent and resurrection, in which the magical rebirth of the divine hero was expressed through the revitalization of a dead physical body. It is this transformative power, in the physical state, that attunes the ancient UnderWorld magical psychology to the most transcendent and intuitive expressions of the nature of divinity.

The Guardian is that energy or entity between psychic and metaphysical states which turns us back upon ourselves. He forbids the passage of any being unable to operate in new dimensions. In this role he is Lord of the Animals, the Shepherd or Forest Warden, and he collects the souls of the Dead as leader of the Wild Hunt. In Celtic mythology and legend he is Lord of the UnderWorld, the Guardian of the Sacred Well, the Keeper of the Great Herds. Certain heroes or kings make pacts with him to benefit their people. It is

from his Gateway, his place of transition, that gifts are exchanged, stolen, or achieved by the Quest.

It is significant that whereas in past centuries the role of frightening or rejecting the unready Traveller was carried out by the fabricated Devil, in the twentieth century it is played by the pseudo-science of psychology. If the Guardian is that which turns us back upon ourselves, closing the access to wild and dangerous kingdoms, then modern psychology is a false guardian and limiter *par excellence*. In this protective role, acting as an expression of the materialist culture, psychology finds one of its rightful places.<sup>15</sup>

In the individual psyche, the ancient Guardian is expressed as that which limits or restricts. It may become an image of fear, loathing or disgust, envy or unfulfilled lust. These are the diabolic emotions with which we are familiar both from orthodox religious suggestion and from modern psychotherapeutic theories. In the Mysteries, such reactions are known to be entirely the response and the responsibility of the individual; they come from within, and not from the guardian power. In religious terms, we tended in the past to blame 'the devil' for our personal and national evils; in modern parlance we claim that we are victims of society, or the products of unavoidable psychic damage in our childhood. In extreme cases, the esoteric traditions would not deny either exterior malefic influence or collapse under social and personal pressure; but these are never used as catch-all explanations or excuses, least of all for self-indulgence.

The Devil cannot truly tempt us; we tempt ourselves. Nor does he keep us out of Heaven, we debar ourselves from truth by refusing to undergo the changes essential to pass within. The Guardian stands at the Gateway where we are made fully aware of our own limitations.

In the ballad 'The Cruel Mother' a woman murders her newborn children. As punishment for this crime, she undergoes a sequence of transmigrations, each lasting for seven years. One of these roles is that of being 'seven years a Porter in Hell'.

A Porter was more than a mere doorkeeper. He had the right to refuse admission to any supplicant, regardless of rank or entitlement. This theme is found in a number of

stories and songs which reflect a medieval or earlier cultural background. This right of refusal or acceptance is found in occult lodge rituals, even nowadays, where the doorkeeper may refuse admission to the lodge if he or she judges this to be necessary. This curious custom is not entirely explained by the retention of outmoded social practice; it has its roots in the magical power of all-who-keep-doors.<sup>16</sup>

Symbolically the Porter is the Door. We find this expressed in the Gnostic Hymn of Jesus: 'A door am I for they who knock upon me.'<sup>17</sup>

For the Cruel Mother to be a porter in Hell for seven years, implies that she was part of the UnderWorld Mystery. Her function would be similar to that of the phantom-guardians employed by ritual sacrifice to protect ancient sites. It is significant that her murdered children are born through the agency of a Tree, as an assisting element in the birth.

It is in the ballad 'False Knight upon the Road', however, that we find the way of transcending the limiting power of the Guardian. This important magical ballad is usually assumed to be a piece of nonsense, or a childish game song, or perhaps a pious Christian lesson to children. It is more likely to be the remnant, regenerated in the common imagination, of a profound teaching.

A false knight, presumably the Devil, challenges a small boy for the right to pass him upon the road. They do not fight with arms, but with riddles or capping-phrases, the old game of going-one-better every time. For each vile suggestion put forward by the False Knight, the child turns the ill to good, by balancing it with an addition to the Knight's wish. The child, who is known as 'The Weaver's Bonny' in some variants, thus takes the apparent ill wish as both a challenge and a gift, and transforms it into something beneficial.

'I wish that you were on the sea',  
Says the False Knight on the Road,  
'Aye, and a good ship under me,'  
Said the Child, and still he stood.

The False Knight, Lord of the Road, Guardian of the Gates,



is an agency of Protection. In his most primal form, he protects the herds, the territory and the people; he gathers the souls of the Ancestors at death and carries them into the transforming realm of the UnderWorld. The essential difference between this ancient passage of the dead into the UnderWorld, and the passage of the individual taught by the Mysteries, was that the individual retained full consciousness, and could pass both in and out during physical incarnation.

With one hand, the Guardian protects the Mysteries from penetration and imbalance, while with the other he protects the individual from contact with energies that he or she is unable to bear. To pass him you must solve all the riddles, but the answers are not words or tricks, they are yourself!

One of the more noticeable occurrences during a genuine magical or Innerworld experience, is a fear that arises from within. This is not the commonplace fear triggered off by an exterior agency, but the reaction mentioned in religious texts as 'the fear of the Lord . . . the beginning of all Wisdom'.<sup>18</sup> It often reacts through into the body, and operates from deeper levels of consciousness than those of mere emotion or discomfort.

This uncontrollable reaction denotes the presence of the Guardian. In Christian symbolism it might be the Guardian Angel bearing a Sword, heralding divine retribution. In the older Mysteries, we are taught what to *be* in the presence of the Guardian, and the fear is transformed and passes away.

### **The Son of Light**

The link between the UnderWorld Guardian and the Divine Son Incarnate is the Horn. Whereas the Horn is used to announce the conception of the Son of Light (in both pagan and Christian Mysteries), it is also used to Summon the Dead. In the later developments of this symbolic power pattern, the Grail announces the presence of the Saviour to an assembled company, or the solitary visionary. It may also act as the vessel of death for the unprepared.

The Dead are summoned in the name of the Son of Light, as he was born into our world by the agency of the Horn, Vessel, Womb or Grail. It should be noted that the Horn is a bisexual symbol.

The ancient Christian Mysteries were a higher harmonic of the pagan Mysteries, and were linked to them by a direct channel of established magical and spiritual enlightenment. The presumed conflict between pagan and early Christian is the result of later editing and schismatic argument between the factions of the political churches. Early Christians were indeed persecuted in Rome or the Empire, but this was because they were the modern equivalent of anti-state terrorists, due to their refusal to acknowledge the political Imperial deities. It seems ironic that their heirs were only too willing to take up the reins of that same politico-religious vehicle and drive it through the Western consciousness, creating an imbalanced and sexually chaotic culture that now threatens to destroy all human and planetary life.

The pagan and early Christian concepts of the Saviour and the Guardian are sometimes assumed to derive from a concept of Duality, that of the myth of the Two Brothers, Light and Dark. In some folk tales and songs, two brothers fight for the love of a girl, and one is killed. The girl then appears and brings the victim back to life. This death and resurrection, or rather regeneration, theme is also found in traditional ritual dramas worldwide. This is the most accessible and simple explanation of a metaphysical relationship, in which polarities merge as one. In the outer world, and in our perceptions of the Innerworlds, we can grasp only rotation or alternation, but in truth both natures are one nature.<sup>19</sup>

The Anointed One of the Mysteries, pagan or Christian, takes upon himself not only the role of Victim and Sacrifice, but that of Hunter and Guardian. He descends into Hell, the UnderWorld, to liberate the beings trapped therein by opening a new way of realization to them.

In the magical symbolism, the beings with heads facing in two or more directions are indicative of this concept: *the Saviour and the Guardian are At One within the UnderWorld*. Only in a corrupt and defective spiritual orthodoxy are they separated, elevating human imperfection to the altar in the place of intimations of divine reality and truth.

This traditional teaching, greatly misrepresented and abused, will reveal an enormous amount of conceptual

material in both meditation and ritual. It is linked to the esoteric teaching regarding the Fall from Grace, or the serial devolution of the worlds from an Archetypical state. There are three phases traditionally taught, which correspond inversely to the three phases of the Tree of Life, mentioned in an earlier chapter.

1. The Fall of Lucifer, after which Man is created to redeem the series of worlds which arose through this devolution of power from a primary mode;
2. the Fall of Man, which reflects the first fall, and in time causes the Son of Light to be born, to redeem Mankind;
3. the descent of the Son of Light into the UnderWorld (Hell) as an act of will.

By this Third Descent, in full knowledge, all previous fallen states of being are summoned for redemption. We could phrase this less poetically and say that all modes of consciousness are offered paths of realignment and re-balance.

In a longstanding ancient ritual, the Horn is used to summon the sanctified dead, the Ancestors, in the name of the Son of Light. Encountered in this manner, they appear as friends and advisors, as Brethren of the Land. If the Horn is employed without the harmonic power of Redemption, or the magical name, the dead respond as phantoms trapped within the UnderWorld. In either case, they are the same Ancestors.

There are important differences in any magical operation, according to the Name employed for its generation and purpose. This should not be confused with mere fetishism or religious devotion. For anyone with an imaginative faculty, magic will work; which means that magic works for everyone, but more obviously to some of us than to others. The effectiveness of magic relies upon an inter-relationship between consciousness, and various 'worlds' or modes of perception.

The laws are amply demonstrated by material physics, where energy is passed through suitable or unsuitable media, with results varying according to the quality of the medium or the routes taken. In modern physics, analysis has become so relativistic that it seems akin to the ancient

metaphysics. Indeed, physics is far better proof of the role of consciousness within the universe than is psychology.

In both magic and in physics, all arbitrary laws are found to be relative. There is no ultimate law or unified formula.

In religion, there is the suggestion that this outer or fallen world will be redeemed by the Second Coming, or in some religions by the First Coming, or the Fifteenth. The standard Qabalah employed in the West interprets this implication as the return of the tenth sphere, the Kingdom or the manifest world, to the position from which it fell. The hidden tradition, however, takes a very different view of this redemptive action, and employs a metaphysical model which underpins both primal and sophisticated symbolism upon the subject.

As the Guardian, or apparent barrier to liberation, and the Saviour or bringer of redemption are merged As One within the UnderWorld, it is in the UnderWorld that humankind finds freedom from illusion, or gains salvation. This 'salvation' is transformation, transmutation; the Second Coming occurs when the power of the Son of Light manifests through the physical body of humankind. This is a group harmonic of the individual resurrection shown in the Christian mythology.

As nuclear experiments have revealed to us the energy within the most minute divisions of matter, so can we reveal the same energy through the matter of our bodies. In this respect, to leave the body behind for some imaginative or conceptual realm is the worst possible action that a man or woman could take, for this breaks the cycle of interaction which flows through the material world.

Another way of explaining this curious tradition would be to suggest that in the UnderWorld, which is timeless potential, the Fall has already been Redeemed. In our group world, bound to apparent time series, the mediating factor is our physical body; but only when it is transformed by energies released within the UnderWorld accessible to human consciousness linked to incarnation.<sup>20</sup>

Once again, the key lies in our perception, for if we alter our pattern of perception, the worlds are changed by it.

The implications of this concept will be rejected by orthodox religious and Qabalist alike; realization,

redemption and restoration, operates through the action of all the so-called higher Spheres being *drawn down* into the Kingdom by the mediation of humankind. This action cannot be done from the Kingdom itself other than through limited occurrences in prayer or invocation, which are temporally bound, and therefore evanescent. As humankind was created or manifested from the source of all imagination to redeem the devolved Lucifer, so it is humankind alone, operating from *beneath* the Kingdom, from the UnderWorld within, that can reach out and draw down the higher powers of creation to make a new and purified world. Paradoxically, this is carried out by reaching Down or Within, and not Up and Outwards. (See Diagrams 1 and 3.)

The divine Crown, the Keystone of the Arch of Creation, is inherent in the physical body. If it can be brought to full awareness, it calls and attunes all other modes or Spheres instantly to its immaculate nature.

The Western traditions of magical education and development, and specifically the UnderWorld or hidden tradition, deal with this simultaneous realization, and teach the means of achieving it through catalytic symbolic agencies which stimulate the reaction.

## 7.

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# **Summoning the Ancestors**

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Among many neglected and misunderstood aspects of the esoteric teachings in the West, none can be so badly represented as the Summoning of the Ancestors. The majority of modern occult groups, teachers, authors or published systems do not touch upon this ability at all. Although there is a lot of diffused material which seems to relate loosely to the subject, very little is explicitly stated about the function of this stage of magical awareness and its role in the initiatory development.

We might infer from the confused evidence that the Summoning has been forgotten, and that it has not been experienced by most of the occultists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Before dealing with the Summoning itself in detail, we must examine its history, as well as similar processes which may be confused in theory and initial practice with the central concept.

The origin of the Summoning of the Ancestors must be assumed to lie in the distant past, although esoteric reports from Innerworld sources often advise that it lies in the future. This paradox is resolved by understanding the Summoning itself, and by experiencing it.

Although modern anthropological studies can assist our understanding of primal and primitive races, the student should be very cautious indeed when drawing comparisons

between the modern aboriginal and the cultures of the presumably uncivilized ancients.

The best-known Western examples of early practices are those of the Celts, as contained within classical references. This evidence is further supported by the practices of the Greeks and Romans, and by some archaeological matter. Detailed analysis of these may be found in reference works.

A simple summary would be as follows:

1. The prehistoric peoples of Europe were ancestor worshippers.
2. Certain elements of this ancestor worship were incorporated into the religions of Greece and Rome, and this basis was retained over a period of many centuries, long after the original meaning was forgotten.
3. The Celts, amalgamated with earlier peoples, were still headhunters and ancestor worshippers when encountered by both Greeks and Romans.
4. The combined Celtic/Greek/Roman religious and magical practices from the historical period show a continuation of the primal belief within the sophisticated cults of the classical deities. As the Empire expanded, a cross-fertilization of oriental influences arose, which culminated in the adoption of Christianity as a State religion in the region of Constantine, during the fourth century AD. By this period, Christianity was widely diffused in numerous forms, including the primal Celtic Church in Britain and parts of France and Brittany, which did not derive from the Roman or Greek Churches. The aims of the Roman Catholic Church of later development were less concerned with converting pagans than with suppression of rival Christians.
5. The entire corpus of pagan material, primal Christian material, and both chthonic and classical expressions of worship, was eventually filtered through the medium of the oral traditions during the early and medieval Christian periods.
6. Some of this traditional material still survives as oral lore today, while a proportion of it is incorporated into the texts of both magical and alchemical literature. Much of our knowledge of this originally oral tradition is derived

from texts set out during the Middle Ages, by monastic scribes who preserved native lore for a variety of reasons. It includes texts in Welsh, early French, Irish, Latin, and later in English.

The formalizing and encapsulating process is epitomized by the 'History of the British Kings', set out by Geoffrey of Monmouth during the twelfth century. The bulk of the material relating to King Arthur, Lancelot and the Holy Grail soon followed.

The unconscious process of regeneration, the balance to the literary variants, has endured through the centuries, offering us ancient ballads and tales from sources as surprising as the twentieth-century city of Birmingham, in addition to more obvious rural and isolated areas.<sup>1</sup>

The early literary sources are used by scholars to identify material in the enduring oral tradition, though many other sources of comparison are also valid.

The Summoning of the Ancestors may be said to derive from a European cult practice of great antiquity. It involved gaining advice, benefit and power from the Innerworlds. In primal and non-technological cultures, this office is undertaken by the seer, seeress, shaman or medicine man or woman. Such people are specialists who work only at their craft, but are not identical to priests and priestesses, in either the ancient or modern sense.

The UnderWorld tradition does not require this type of dedication, which is quite out of keeping with our present culture. It enables the individual to live a normal and intellectually and emotionally adequate life, yet to be able to conduct the Summoning, and undertake the Journey. The modern seer or seeress is not a withdrawn dramatic figure misplaced in time and space, nor a trance medium as was common in the classical and pagan formal rituals.

As the entire subject is very confused in both practice and theory, we should attempt some clarification of the basic aspects. These may be nothing more nor less than historical stages, or they may represent different states of consciousness and Innerworld contact, and varied degrees of value and efficiency.

Whatever the origin or cultural background, there are



some quite separate systems which have become confused under the general explanatory (and derogatory) term of 'mediumship'.

In popular mediumship as practised by spiritualist groups, the person acting as the medium, an agent of transmission, does not act in full individual awareness. In extreme examples, the personality of the human is supposed to be replaced by an entity from another state of consciousness, ostensibly for communication.

This entranced state renders the medium insensible, and is often dangerous to physical health; it involves an unnatural depletion of the vital energies. The method is one of communicating with discarnate entities, from other dimensions or modes of consciousness to those habitually occupied by the medium's personality. These beings are close to the human time-stream, and make themselves known through *displacement*.

It is likely that the ancient temple and nature cults operated a similar system, but the old seers and seeresses were supported by powerful ritual patterns and a highly sophisticated body of metaphysical instruction. None of this material is known to the general modern medium or spiritualist circle. Furthermore, the pagan ancestors were well aware of other more advanced methods of communication between the worlds; it is from these other methods that genuine seership, as opposed to displacement mediumship, was developed.

In seership, the operation of displacement does not occur. The individual is in control of the ability, and is able to communicate with the entities in the Innerworlds. Such beings are very different in type and quality to those that associate with the psyche of the displacement medium, or of the partial-displacement clairvoyant and sensitive.

Seership is carefully tuned, less subject to prattling trivia; those who practise claim that they contact beings who have developed beyond the need for human gossip, semi-religious platitudes and similar irrelevancies that are offered by most mediums or their 'spirit-guides'. It is by occult seership that esoteric orders claim to receive teaching and instruction from the Innerworld adepts, the non-physical members and mentors. Such material is often technical, explanatory or

Hermetic in character, but there is also an Orphic or emotional/biological mode at the deeper levels of interaction.

The difference between mediumship and seership, therefore, is one of both method and content.

A third and popular psychic phenomenon is 'remembering past lives'. This takes the form of apparent memories from known cultural or historical periods, or of visual clues to such past events in the psyche of a third party. The review of past lives for another person is possible to the displacement medium, through his or her parasitic entity, and to the seer or seeress through direct inner vision manifesting in the accessible consciousness. There are traditional methods and styles of interpretation of such apparent memories, depending upon the school of thought or metaphysics preferred by the seer.

A fourth process is that of magical images or non-natural imaginative forms. These are created and maintained by ritual, meditation and worship, and are attuned to places in both Inner and Outerworlds, and occasionally to specific groups and individuals. These forms can provide information, energy surges and depletions, and may generate recognizable behaviour patterns in sensitive human recipients. Experienced workers learn how to relate such forms to the deeper Archetypes from which their pattern is devolved, and not to accept them at face value.

The identifying factor of the Summoning may be defined negatively; it is not any of the above categories.

The Summoning of the Ancestors is a distinct mode of awareness, which may incorporate certain features already described, such as apparent memories, information or prediction, but it is not a type of mediumship or seership, nor is it a product of magical images. As a general rule, it is a mode of awareness which is accessible to the Seer, but not to the medium.

What, then, is the Summoning? It is a change which occurs in the blood.<sup>2</sup> It is not connected to memory, yet can produce the memories of many people from the distant past. Something which happens within the bloodstream enables the individual to attune to a store or body of consciousness which transcends yet includes individuality. The prime subject matter, nearest to the individual who gains this

curious change of metabolism, is that of the Ancestors from the immediate and hereditary environment.

Traces of this mode of cognition are found within both Eastern and Western systems of metapsychology, and it is probably one of the more subtle magical principles which underlays the complex symbolism of the Mass.

In many cases, the Summoning creates a deeply empathic and emotional response, holding the seeds of memories of past events, often of extremely distant historical or prehistorical periods. During this early stage, the predominant memories are of difficulties, disasters, and acts of injustice upon a large scale. At a later stage, when the initial ferment has come under control, material can be selected for comprehension.

The Summoning begins in the Past, but it is not confined to the Past. The development of control and selection of consciousness apprehended 'through the blood' gradually brings the flow of tuned awareness into the present, externalizing into the seer's consciousness of real or serial time. Finally the cognition is merged with the Inner present, the germinal area of consciousness which holds the potential of the future.

In the Present, the Ancestors are met face to face; from the Past they flow through the individual from an unseen source.

The ability to summon the Ancestors, once a central function of all magic and religion, develops from another magical power or mode of heightened consciousness, one which is frequently discussed and published, but which is meaningless as a solitary exercise out of its proper context. *The Summoning cannot be enacted without first experiencing the Arousal of the Inner Fire.*

Without the energy of the Inner Fire, memories may indeed occur, as may occasional Innerworld contacts with basic teachers, saints, or saviour images. Such psychic events, however, are unenlightened in the practical sense of the word, for without the illumination of the Inner Fire, they are sporadic and obscure.

Many prohibitions and warnings have been made about the operation of the Inner Fire. It will, we are told, render us sexually insatiable; it will lead to vast illusions of egotistic

grandeur; it will make us physically imbalanced. These coy warnings are only the religious or occultists' equivalent of the old nonsense about masturbation causing blindness and idiocy. That which is connected to sexual power, to polarity, has been so poisoned in our culture that we long for its expression, yet fear it at the same time, seeking to impose our fear on others lest they tread where we do not have the courage to go.

This pathetic situation was engineered by orthodox religion, in a very deliberate manner, for the Inner Fire is employed by monastic orders, the Society of Jesus, and by the priesthood. It is kept 'secret' from the ordinary people, who, however, maintain a diffuse and regenerative contact with it through the dream images of the oral traditions. We need hardly add that the normal expression of the Inner Fire is through sexual union, which is why the churches insisted on sexual intercourse being retained within the Church through marriage.

There is a certain amount of valid caution in the esoteric teachings regarding the Inner Fire, and in the Western Traditions the subject is taught through Innerworld experience, and not by the application of physical stimulus in exercises such as yoga or tantric development. Many of the more ridiculous antics of so-called occultists and witches are merely a more refined level of sexual gratification, but this does not imply that valid experiences may not be gained through making mistakes.

Once the ability to arouse the Inner Fire has been learned, and there are several levels or degrees of this awakening, the Ancestors will come when called. They bring with them a vast store of memories, experience and clear visual images from the apparent past. Attuning this flow of cognition to the eternal Present, or the balancing point between Inner and Outer awareness leads to the meeting, face to face. From this turning point, comes the perception of the seeming future.

The first Summoning is a magical operation, but the Meeting or Convocation is of a different order, and should be termed a spiritual operation.<sup>3</sup>

Perception of the future can be made by other means entirely, and many prophetic utterances of greater or lesser

significance arise from a variety of modes. The insight into the future which is more important, as we shall discuss in a later chapter, is the prophetic consciousness which is associated with certain great Western seers: Thomas of Erledoune, Michael Scot, and the greatest of them all, the mysterious Merlin. This ability is traditionally known as the Tongue that Cannot Lie.

Although there are individual Teachers, self-aware as entities in the Innerworlds, the Summoning itself may also be educational. It is important to grasp the difference between inner communication with an individual entity of consciousness, and information derived from the power of the Blood.

Regrettably for the inexperienced magician, many Innerworld methods of instruction use a combination of both individual contact and the Ancestors within the Blood. This partial arousal of Ancestral memory causes confusion among students, but in time can be identified by its subjective quality.

In a fully awakened Seer or Seeress, who can arouse the Inner Fire at will, the operation of Summoning is utterly clear and precise. During early stages of tuition and experiment, however, an Innerworld contact may intentionally create flashes of ancestral memory within the field of awareness of the student. This is done by momentary stimulus of the previously dormant Inner Fire, rather like gently nudging someone to get their attention, and is analogous to communication by touch between people who cannot see one another in the dark.

Difficult concepts are often illustrated in this manner, causing images to flash briefly within the visual imagination during ritual and meditation, and while attuning to special sites within the land. The momentary stimulus from the Innerworld consciousness causes a brief flash of the Inner Fire in the body-psyche complex; this in turn releases images related to Ancestral memory through a catalysis of the bloodstream, generating images within the visual consciousness, the imagination.

The foregoing may sound rather complex and round-about, but it constitutes one of the simplest and most accessible interchanges of consciousness between types of being who normally cannot contact one another.

The Ancestors are not necessarily one and the same as those who teach within the Mysteries; they are a collective voice and visual store, in which individual tones and colours may predominate from time to time. The modern psychological analogy is shown as the various elements which rotate within the postulated unconscious, but the metapsychological teachings suggest that these are the stored consciousness of people who are alive within another time cycle.

To clarify this, in the most simple and basic exposition of the Ancestral lore, the consciousness that arises from the Summoning is due to a connection that operates out of and independent of serial time. In linear analogy, we show this connection as a spiral or double helix, as this gives us a visual key to the possibility of such a transaction of consciousness. It is no coincidence that this same symbol has been employed in the study of genetics.

The Ancestors are not gods, and although we have loosely suggested that early cultures practised ancestral worship, it is clear even from a materialist historical angle that this is a fairly superficial rationalization, and that a complex of gods, goddesses, powers, beings and ancestors filled the imagination and psychic interaction of the past, just as it does today.

More essential to the operation of the UnderWorld Tradition is the understanding that the Ancestors are not always sentient advisors or teachers during the Past-flow phase of the Summoning; they offer their errors as well as their blessings, for they are like us, but in another time and place. They should not be worshipped, made the recipients of personal sacrifice or judgement, nor should they be the objects of misplaced emotion. The Ancestors are worthy of respect, consideration and attention.

For practical purposes, we may treat them as the collective past, our own past genetically, attuned through an activation of our current physical body. They also operate in an amplified manner through other physical locii, the sacred sites, certain objects and rituals; on a great scale they attune to synchronizations of planets, Moon, Sun and stars. Magically we would say that the stellar patterns are generated by tides of consciousness within a great Awareness that incorporates the Ancestors.

**Diagram 4. The Spiral of the Ancestors.**

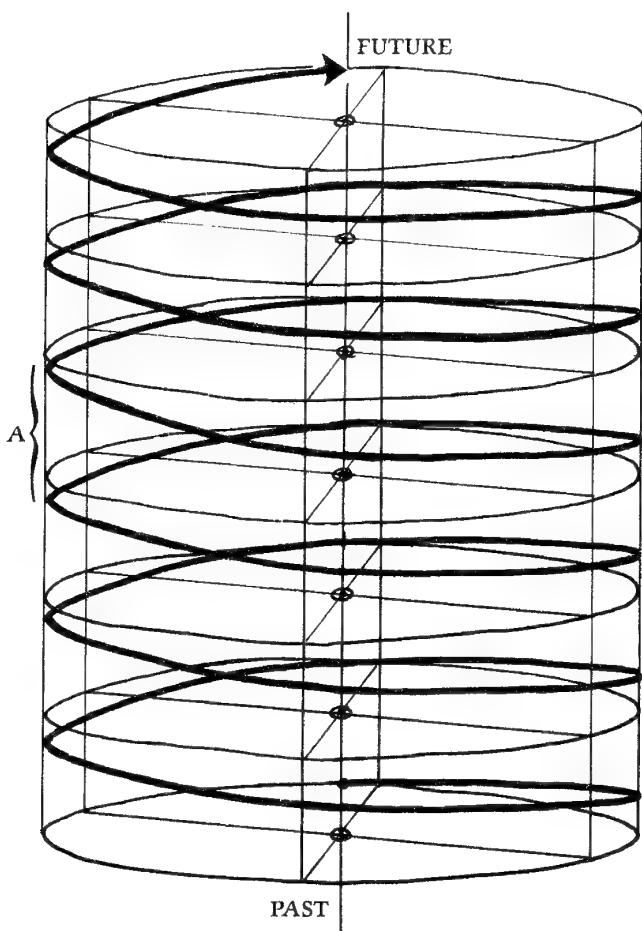
If we regard Time as linear the distance from the theoretical Past to the theoretical Future is infinitely extended.

In magical theory, all energetic sequences are cyclical and spiral.

The point marked 'A' upon the Spiral diagram represents a 'short cut' between areas of time/consciousness that sparks across the progression of the ancestral/temporal sequence.

In this way people in 'the distant past' are closer to our 'present' than people in the 'recent past'.

The spiral is an analogous model which enable us to grasp why many experiences of seership and far-memory involve the distant past.



Returning to the Threefold Summoning, corresponding to the Past, Present and Future, tradition teaches that it is only during the second and third phase that mutual communication may arise. This is of a different order to the interplay between Innerworld contacts and Outerworld mediators.

If we consider Diagram 4, the Spiral of the Ancestors, it shows that there are areas where the distant past and the individual present are close together. The present is the future for those in the relative past, so the possibility of interchange of consciousness arises by jumping the 'distance' between levels of the spiral.

The Spiral may be exemplified as a logarithmic function related to the synchronicity of the Earth's Solar System; it is in this respect that astrology can be very effective.<sup>4</sup> An example of the interchange between past, future and present is given in our Appendix, 'The Tomb of a King', an account of seership in practice at a prehistoric site. Occurrences of this type are attuned to locations and to specific times, yet they must rotate around a number of stages of the Spiral before they may be activated.

This conceptual model may explain why material from the distant past seems to be more accessible to the seer or sensitive than that from the recent past, and why predictions tend to leap far into the future. We should add the obvious caution that the past is often coloured by a false romanticism, which tends to encourage self-indulgent whimsy, therefore the distant past is a temptation for idle reveries.

The Ancestors awaken within the individual psychic and body complex, through the triggering of a series of biochemical changes within the bloodstream. This altered or Aroused Blood stimulates the operation of tiny organs within the skull, said to be inactive or partially active glands in medical terminology. These organs are able to translate codified signals within the Aroused Blood, and to link them to specific visual resonance or imagery held in common by many people in association with their environment.<sup>5</sup>

There is no medical proof of this teaching in orthodox terms, though in recent years studies of psycho-chemical changes of perception have been rife.

The traditional understanding is not merely a matter of



clan, tribe or genetics, even though racial inheritance is a striking feature of the flow of awareness during the Summoning. An adept of this technique of consciousness may be able to attune to the ancestral memories of many races other than his or her own. Flashes of varied ancestral awareness often cause confusion over 'past lives', and the experimenter should exercise discretion. Most people pursuing their past lives are suffering from a weakness or dissatisfaction of identity in their present life; such problems can be resolved and outgrown through meditation upon deeper reality and truer identity than that of the ephemeral personality.

When considering the apparent past lives, the individual must be aware that in a past life, he was not as he is in the present. The personality mask was different, so no real identification can be made with random memories of past roles.

In some cases, where a person has a long history of mediation, or true priesthood, the personal mask is replaced by the Mask of a Bright One. The individual becomes a vessel of an archetypical (in the metaphysical sense) Power and Being. If this occurs, and it is a rare phenomenon, the inner and outer lives resonate together very powerfully, until a series of lives, remembered or unremembered, become coherent and symbolically identical.

A coherent personal identity may be built in this manner, but only because the devolved personality has been reattuned during many incarnations to lose its illusion of outward-flowing separation.

Paradoxically, it is the loss of mask, the dissolution of personality that creates coherence of identity from life to life; so-called strength of personality, which is merely a reinforcement of delusion, cannot achieve this.

In rare extreme cases, recessive and self-devouring conceptualizing can create a powerful Phantom, and as discussed in an earlier chapter, ineffectual echoes of this type like to vampirize spiritualist gatherings, leeching off vital energy in exchange for gossip.

As with the Three presentations of the Tree of Life, the Three phases of the Summoning are experienced in order. They lead into one another in a manner which cannot be

forced or anticipated. As magical growth is a psychic and spiritual model of natural growth, certain processes cannot be forced without risk of damage.

Once the sequence of the Summoning, with its three phases has come alive, the individual can develop the ability to move directly to any one of the phases by choice. Initially the communion with the Ancestors is a purgative experience; once the encounter has been fully absorbed and understood, it may be repeated at will without the catalytic shock.

The flow of consciousness arises from the collective past, invisible and unknown to the Traveller. It flows over from behind, from an area which he or she cannot as yet perceive. Only when this flow has settled under control does it begin to emerge into the timeless Inner present. To try and meet the Ancestors face to face in the unreal group world, our outer world in serial time, is magically impossible, and such attempts are to be avoided. They invite attention from life forms who feed off the unbalanced psyche of humans seeking sensation, gratification, or false glamour and power from magical rituals. In this context the orthodox warnings against Necromancy may be justified, but the communion with the dead was one of the genuine aspects of the Mysteries that the churches sought to suppress, so we should not be too surprised if this valid mode of inner consciousness has been vilified.

We could rephrase the concept, saying that the Present of the Summoning is the true present, whereas the present of serial or mechanically defined relative time is merely a reference measure for limited consciousness. To attempt to fill a limited frame of reference with an unlimited consciousness is to risk explosion.

The flow from the Past dissolves attachment to the false present, in a catalytic state of consciousness. This is the symbolic seething Cauldron of the Celtic Mysteries. It boils down to the bones, but also brings those bones back to life, and confers knowledge of knowledge, and shape of shape.

From the true Present, a realm out of time, perception of the future may arise. This also occurs in three modes.

The three modes or levels of future perception are analogous to the devolution and manifestation triplicity

given in standard magical and Qabalistic texts. The subtle difference lies in their being phases of perception, of cognition of the potential Future, and not of the progression from spirit to matter.

The three phases are:

1. Inner cognition of potential, in a state of absence of images and words (First Triad of the Tree of Life);
2. generation of images or poetry of primal quality out of this cognitive source (Second Triad of the Tree of Life);
3. expression of the images as verbal, written, pictorial or other physically attuned communication for transference to other people (Third Triad upon the Tree of Life).

To conclude our chapter on the Summoning, and its subsequent prophetic insight, we can hardly improve upon the example of the arch-Seer Merlin. Towards the close of 'The Prophecies of Merlin', derived from oral Welsh sources, but set into Latin verse by Geoffrey of Monmouth, we find an apocalyptic vision, in which the Ancestors emerge into consciousness during the catalytic reordering of the Zodiac. This vision has parallels both within the psyche of the seer, and with the cycle of manifest creation.

The malignity of Saturn the star shall fall upon the Earth with the rain of heaven. . . The chariot of the Moon shall rend the Zodiac, and the Pleiades shall burst into tears and lamentation. None hereafter shall return to his wonted duty, but Ariadne shall lie hidden within the closed gateways of her sea girt headland. In the twinkling of an eye shall the seas lift them up, and the dust of the ancients begin to live again. With a baleful blast the winds will move in conflict and battle, and the sound of them shall be heard among the furthest stars.<sup>6</sup>

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## **The Hermetic and Universal Trees**

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### **The Hermetic Tree**

Before elaborating upon the Universal Tree, a short history of the standard Tree of Life should be considered. Scholars of Hebrew Qabalah, by which we mean genuine Hebrew mystics to whom Qabalah is part of cultural tradition, are unlikely to take the modern Western variants of the Qabalistic symbolism very seriously.

Those who are experts on the adapted semi-Hebrew system used in the West will find that the following history is written from an unusual viewpoint, for there is a non-Qabalistic Tree of Life that pre-dates our oriental variant so widespread in occult literature.

The material presented is only useful as part of a coherent practical system. There is no suggestion that the UnderWorld Tradition, or esoteric aspects of the Tree of Life, can replace or disprove existing Qabalistic systems. To make such a pretentious suggestion would be to fly in the face of the tradition itself — for the Qabalah is a whispered teaching, and all whispers undergo metamorphosis as they are passed from mouth to ear in succession. The old jokes about messages passed along a line are as true in magical orders as they are in the locker-room.

It is by considering the transmission of the message, rather than its detailed and often irrelevant content, that fresh interpretation is established. It is the art and quality of

communication that is important, combined with the inner liberty to communicate, and not the words assembled at any one time in any one temple, order, or book.

The Spirit may be clear, and the Letters may be fixed, but how did certain Letters devolve from the clarity of the Spirit to their present state of gibberish?

The oral tradition must be compared to the written one, and it cannot be overemphasized that each illuminates the other, and that each is incomplete without the other.

A true reference to the Universal Tree cannot be made in writing, for it employs quite different modes of communication; it is a matter of Being rather than Reading about Being. Approaches to the subject cannot be direct; they are oblique or circular or spiralling.

Modern intellects are easily fettered by the power of the printed word, the reasoned fact, the proven original. A written exposition of magic, or of the Tree of Life, falls far short of the genuine oral teaching. It can only be compared to a tourist handbook, which is no substitute for the actual experience of being there. In most occult publications, one handbook copies the other continually, until we must suspect that very few of the writers have done anything other than read tourist literature.

A collective oral tradition, or a group tradition such as that of genuine Hebrew mysticism within a Hebrew culture, works not only through description or interpretation, but by direct action upon the consciousness.

A tradition is fuel for consciousness, causing it to blaze up, feeding it, and at the same time generating the light by which the consciousness illuminates the tradition.

Symbols should speak directly to the inner levels of awareness, and the soul should respond to these symbols. This method is so far removed from the literary style and content of most occult textbooks that it is little wonder that the most promising students are in a state of revolution against both standard occultism and its poor relative, psychology. For the problem that is shared between modern occult texts and psychology is the constant appeal to non-existent sources of reason, in the assumption that to define or label a thing reasonably is to explain it fully.

The great bedevillment of literacy is its obsession with

reason and meaning. Reduction to absurd detail is death to any magical work, and is clear to see in the pedantic and self-acclaimed hierarchical writings and attitudes of Western magical teachers. This weakness is amplified when an order, lodge or society is involved.

Perhaps the most telling logical objection to magic is that it is an excuse for sentimental and fluffy thinking, a realm of vague spirituality and fanciful powers, linked to blatantly corrupt and juvenile systems of correspondence between symbolic units, such as the much-vaunted magical alphabets or the Tarot Trumps. Hard reasoning and criticism, we are told, are essential to destroy such flabby counter-productive maundering. Any practical occultist would agree with this viewpoint, and a magical adept, male or female, is more like a trained combat expert than a wilting narcissus.<sup>1</sup>

If we employ the fundamental traditions, the pruning and disposal of trivial material has already been carried out by our Ancestors. The oral tradition has ground and polished its symbols until they are diamond hard and bright. Essential magical lore cannot be forgotten by the group mind, for it regenerates endlessly.

The serious student of the esoteric arts, in the twentieth century in the West is in a difficult position, and not merely through the lack of competent human teachers. At the close of the so-called Christian era, we can see powerful acceleration and compaction of symbolic programmes initiated during the third to sixth centuries AD. These programmes now bear fruit as alienation, dehumanizing of the individual, and spiritual poverty and degradation.

The UnderWorld Tradition employs the Tree of Life as one of its major Keys, and although we use mathematical or Qabalistic basic models for illustration, the tradition itself is clearly non-Qabalistic in origin. It acts as an interface, enabling energies to be transferred to the Outerworld from a transformative level that runs beneath. In the most profound apprehensions of reality, this UnderWorld is seen to be unified with stellar manifestation; but for our present purposes, we can regard Outerworld as meaning the human psychic-body complex, and its action upon the environment.

**Diagram 5. The OVERWORLD and UNDERWORLD  
Tree of Life.**

The unified Tree of the UnderWorld shows the descending levels of the UnderWorld Initiation.

While the upper Tree (refer to basic re-attributes of the Tree of Life in Diagram 5(a)) is the usual meditational key employed in Western occultism, it is the Reflected Tree that enables us to energize the structure within our own body/psychic complex.

**Reflected Tree**

10: The Physical Body.

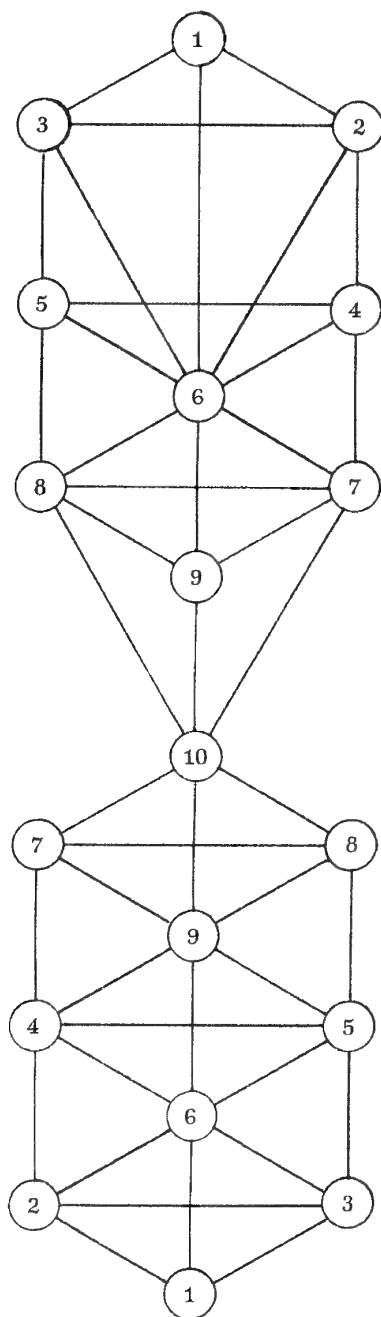
7-8-9: Passing Within: experiencing the individual psychic-energetic entity.

4-5-6: Experiencing the Powers of Giving (Sphere 4) and Taking (5) which merge and transform into the Fruit of Light (6).

2-3-1: Experiencing the Universal nature of Consciousness.

In meditation this sequence is operated by visualizing a descent through the physical body to an inner centre or source. As suggested by our diagram it is harmonically equivalent to the standard use of the Tree of Life in 'rising through the planes' or ascending from level to level in visualization.

The activation of the transformative visions found within the UnderWorld Tradition render any 'evil' or 'imbalance' out of this polarity sequence. Each opposing force Within is turned to creative account by the catalytic action of the Initiation.





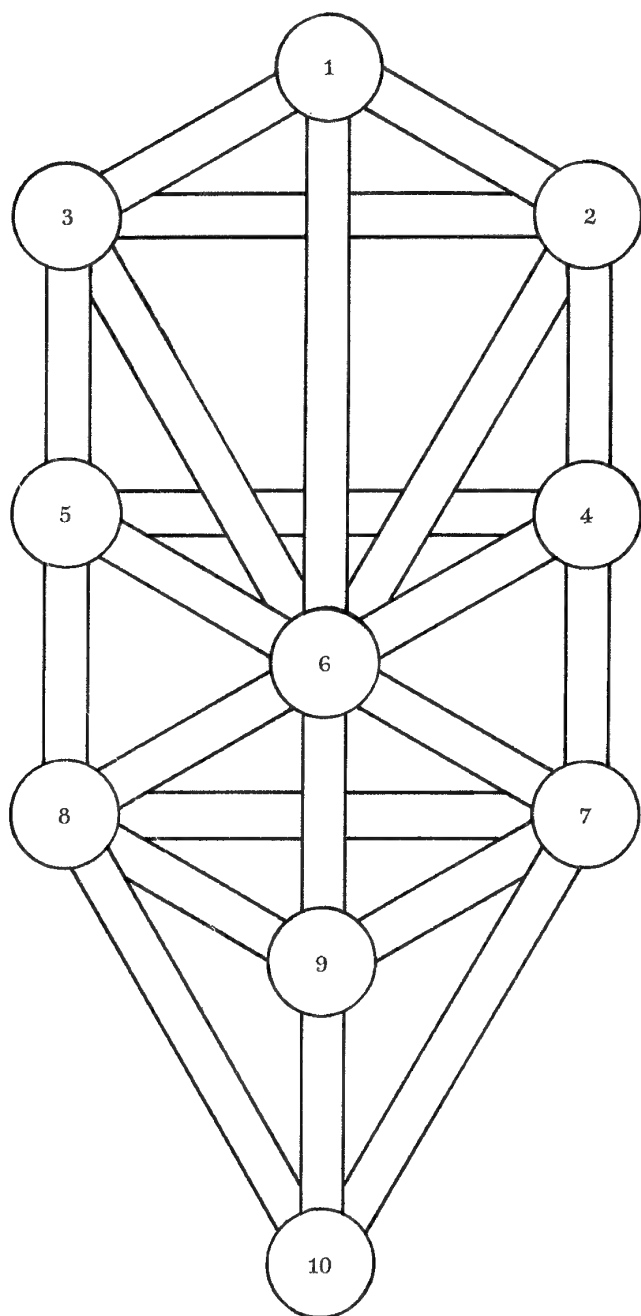
**Diagram 5(a). The Polarity Attributes of the Tree of Life.**

- 1: Original Source of all Being. (Neutral/Balanced)
- 2: Wisdom. Primal Creative Power. (Active, Analytic, 'Male')
- 3: Understanding; Primal Creative Vessel. (Catalytic, Receptive, 'Female')
- 4: The Giver (Mercy)  
Harmonic & Outpouring of Energies from (2). (Analytic, Active, 'Male')
- 5: The Taker. (Severity)  
Harmonic Vessel of (3). (Catalytic, Receptive, 'Female')
- 6: The Central Illumination/Consciousness. (Beauty, Sons of Light)  
Balanced merging of all Energies. (Balanced, Poised, Hermaphrodite)
- 7: The Young Goddess (Victory) the emotions. (Analytic, Active, 'Female')
- 8: The Young God (Honour) the intellect. (Catalytic, Receptive, 'Male')
- 9: The Union (Foundation). (Resolving Male and Female United)
- 10: Expression (Kingdom). (The result of all 9 stages)

It should be realized that the Tree of Life attributes have not only a Male-Female-Neutral sequence of Right, Left, and Central Pillars, but that the Polarities vary according to Direction. For example:

In magical initiations it is the central Triad (4/5/6) that are sought as agents of transformation. Approaching the Power of Taking (5) from a human state, this mode of consciousness reduces and dissolves energies, prior to their transfer across the Abyss to Understanding (3). Approached from other states or spheres in the polarity-complex, the interaction will vary accordingly. It is this polar variety that gives rise to the Paths, commonly shown by Tarot Trump Images. (For a Harmonic Path Sequence see W. G. Gray, illustration in *Magical Ritual Methods*, 1969).

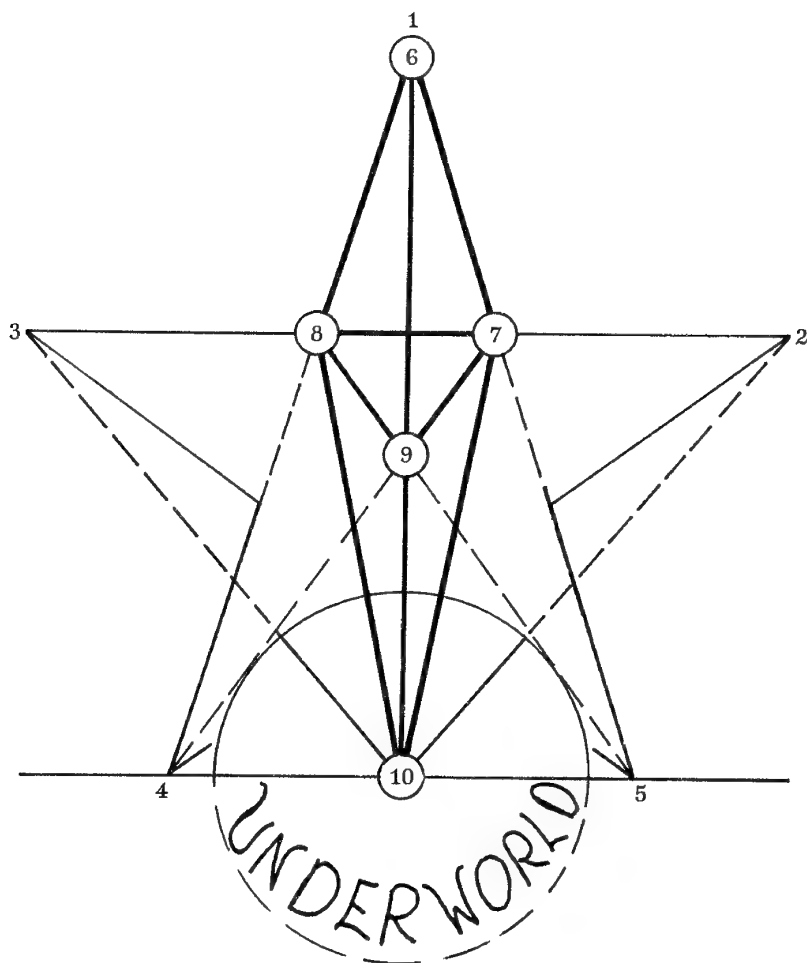
As the polarized energies approach expression, they are increasingly bi-sexual or rotational in their polarity. Spheres 7 and 8 for example, are usually represented by Venus and Mercury; but they might also be Adonis and Minerva. By descending the Tree, Polarity becomes Sexuality. By descending to the UnderWorld, Sexuality again becomes Polarity.



**Diagram 5(b).**

The Tree of Life may be drawn in a number of ways different from the standard modern publicized variant.

*Diagram 5(b)* shows the upper-half of a variant form which creates a series of Glyphs for meditation. The lower-half of this version of the Tree is a mirror image of the figure shown, sharing the base line 4-10-5.



There is a very significant difference between Westernized Qabalah and the native UnderWorld Tree of Life; the first grows from Earth to Heaven, while the second grows from the UnderWorld to the Earth. In orthodox symbolism this inverted Tree, the mirror of the symbols usually employed (but with one important difference as we can see in Diagrams 5 and 5a) is regarded as 'evil'. Initiates of the UnderWorld Mystery might regard an unbalanced and top-heavy Tree as equally evil, and suggest that this was the cause of the series of falls from ideal balanced consciousness. Fortunately there is no such dispute, for standard literary Qabalah is an incomplete system, and the completion is gained by experience and insight into the Innerworlds, where the UnderWorld Tree is plain for all to see. We might also say that it grows equally from Earth to the UnderWorld as from the UnderWorld to Earth.<sup>2</sup>

Hints of the other aspects of the Tree are found in esoteric literature, particularly the early texts that employ Qabalistic symbolism, and especially in the mathematical and topological presentations which lead inevitably to the configuration of the UnderWorld.

The most frequently published form of the Tree of Life is unknown in Eastern symbology, where it appears mainly as a sexual or vegetation symbol. As a composite glyph, the Tree used today is a modified form of a topological model which appeared in Europe during the twelfth or thirteenth century. It undoubtedly has an older oral tradition, and the general consensus of modern experts is that the Tree is drawn from Hebrew Qabalistic sources, and that the Hebrew mystical system of Emanations is the purest form of the structure.<sup>3</sup>

This widely accepted opinion has led to Western magical societies that give a 'purely Hebrew' emphasis to their use of the Tree of Life, further based upon a justification gained from orthodox Christian authority. This usage includes Hebrew alphabet, language, god-names, angelic and archangelic orders, all of which are virtually unknown to European consciousness, other than in general Biblical derivation. It need hardly be said that Biblical variants of Hebrew mystical symbolism are slightly inaccurate upon occasion.

Regrettably, some of the greatest intellects in theosophy, metaphysics and linguistics promulgated the universal alphabetic originality of Hebrew, but this must be judged in the light of the social and political atmosphere of their period, in which any system not derived from some source acceptable to Christian authority could, and often did, lead to official prosecution.

The derivation of the Tree of Life in the West is a more subtle development than a mere wholesale lifting of Hebrew tradition. The use of a genuinely Western Tree, the symbol found in folk tales, songs and the legends and Celtic myths that clearly pre-date the literary appearance of the Qabalistic Tree, can lead to a greater flexibility and depth of both meditation and ritual, tapping areas of collective and individual consciousness that find the literary occult tradition inoperable.

The European traditions employ the Tree as a generation symbol, not confined to the propagation of the natural world, but reaching through a series of worlds, with its roots in the UnderWorld. Norse mythology has a spectacular variant of this motif, but it is also found in Celtic lore, and may be reasonably said to be a common property of consciousness within the Western psyche.

In one Celtic tale, that of Peredur, the Tree is composed vertically, one half of green leaves, and the other of flames. It had a combined identity, not a duality, linking both Inner and Outer worlds.<sup>4</sup> In other oral sources, it stood at the Gate to the UnderWorld, and had a fearsome Guardian, a monstrous or loathsome female who could transform at will into a dark and beautiful Queen. Around the Tree coiled a Serpent, guarding the Fruit of Wisdom, Knowledge and Eternal Life; or in the Irish version, the fruit of Poetic Inspiration.

It is essential for the student of magic to grasp that the Tree of Life has a natural and neglected role within Western esoteric lore. To confine it to Hebrew usage out of cultural context, or to pseudo-Scriptural attributes can only limit its use.

Hebrew Qabalah is an oral tradition, as are all genuine mystical and magical teachings, and developed the Tree of Life from a basic symbol which sprouted in Middle-Eastern

soil. This must be given serious meditation, for from a magical viewpoint, the Ancestors and the Land are not properly attuned to the individual psyche when a Hebrew tradition is forced upon a non-Hebrew soul. The flow of power may be generated, but it cannot be properly routed or earthed, any more than it can through any other oriental system grafted onto Western consciousness.

The important difference between the version of the glyph that appeared in medieval Europe and the native Tree of Life is that the Hebrew presentation has a strong mathematical and geometrical emphasis. This structure is a merging of the natural laws of proportion and spherical geometry with the organic tree symbolism familiar to the native tradition.

The mathematical Tree is now shown in a rather watered down shorthand form in modern texts, with the geometric ambience removed or ignored. Although we are often told that it derives from Hebrew sources (because the early manuscripts drew upon Hebrew traditional variants for their pictographs and illustrations), it is obvious that the mathematical Tree of Life owes a great deal to the conceptual models of the classical world, such as those of Pythagoras and Plato. It derives from traditions of metaphysics and magical topology which underpin all conceptual, philosophical, astrological, astronomical and mathematical systems, including Hebrew Qabalah.<sup>5</sup>

The structure displays, or should display, a set of laws relating to *shape*. These laws hold for energies released within a spherical containing field or vessel. This system was not devised by some unknown genius, for it derives from intuitive and cognitive impressions that appear in human consciousness as the result of attempting to penetrate the Archetypal patterns of Creation. For magical purposes, the Tree of Life also shows sets of polarity, or applicable laws which arise in both physical and metaphysical or psychic interactions.

The Spherical model is difficult to grasp without a great deal of training in visualization and subtle mathematics (see for example some of the bizarre variants in nineteenth and twentieth-century occult publications). To help the student, a flat analogue was employed, and this was further reduced into a simple catch-all glyph, the basic Tree of Life.

The analogue held good for the Circle of Art, and was obviously a variant of the astrological system, derived from the same intuitive-mathematical-geometrical model. The original of such models does not exist, and we cannot apply the derivation game to any study of their relationship. They relate because they all devolve from a prime model which may never be realized; it is the struggle of consciousness in pursuit of this model that leads us on to fresh discovery, new attitudes of relationship between ourselves and the environment, be it biological or astrological. Many of the major discoveries of astronomy are based upon experiments with the Tree of Life mathematics of harmonic balance; Johannes Kepler, for example, merely restated theories and calculations that were already apparent to Qabalists, and which must have been accessible to the ancients who employed the prime proportional models.<sup>6</sup>

Astronomy and astrology may seem too removed from our immediate environment, but the Tree of Life model uses the same set of relationships to describe the human body, and its bio-electrical energies that enfold and enact consciousness. In the UnderWorld Tradition, the stars are not removed to inaccessible space, but are found within the body of Earth, which is also our physical human body.

During the medieval period, probably as the result of a fresh influx of oriental philosophy after the Crusades, the flat topological Tree of Life, derived from a solid or spherical master key, was identified with the initiatory and naturalistic Tree symbol well known and widespread throughout native tradition in Europe. If we accept the fascinating evidence of coherence in the symbolism of religious buildings, we can also detect this mathematical and proportional concept appearing in the structure of the great abbeys which developed in this period. They are clearly solid analogues of the same primal relationship pattern.<sup>7</sup>

Theologically, the Glyph restated the folk tale of the Garden of Eden, an oriental myth which became formalized in the Christian armoury of degradation of Woman. In this context, the story of the Tree and the Garden offered in the Quest for the Holy Grail is of prime importance. It derives from the hidden traditions, and is heretical by orthodox standards, giving us an insight into the old biological or

genetic magic, in which Man is restored by Woman. The basis of this tale is that during the Expulsion, Eve absentmindedly held on to a slip or shoot from the Tree. Offshoots of this, planted in the outer world, were built into the magical Ship of Solomon, which was sent through time to convey the message of a coming Saviour. Careful study of this remarkable tale should be made by anyone considering the Western Mysteries.<sup>8</sup>

The suggestion that Man is Saved by Woman, or that female power is essential for transformation of consciousness into new realms, is shown clearly upon the Tree of Life. The structure of the groups of relationships in the flat mathematical glyph gives us an insight into the polarities and exchanges involved. In the pagan genetic magic, the analogue was carried right through into the patterns of breeding and reproduction which were central to the Kingship Mystery. In time this system became utterly decadent, leaving us with the odd inheritance of materialistic aristocracy tied to political religion.

The ridiculous emphasis upon Hebrew as *the* Divine Language is not merely the result of Christian supremacy in Europe. To the student with any knowledge of oral tradition, it is clear that the employment of Hebrew in magic in Europe is partly the product of simple ignorance. Once again, we must be clear that this does not apply to individuals and groups to whom Jewish Qabalah is part of a cultural tradition and ancestral inheritance.

Magical orders, such as the famous Golden Dawn derived from literary Germanic sources with Eastern esoteric influences, were unaware that there was a vital Tree of Life tradition in the West. In pursuit of shadowy power and secret elitism, they chose to ignore not only the obvious historical Christian influence that caused Hebrew to appear in Western Magic, but the simple fact that *all* races, Eastern, or Western, claim that their language was once pure and Divine. The fact that Hebrew tradition also makes this claim is by no means unique.

The mystical linguists of the Renaissance, such as Father Kircher, exerted a powerful influence upon later literary occultism; but their aim was to diffuse the concept, quite acceptable to orthodoxy, that all languages devolved from an



angelic language. This is merely an intellectual restatement of the oral tradition common to every race; politically it was abused to maintain orthodox hierarchical power, but poetically and intuitively it was true.

Every race believes that their original tongue was divine and potent, for this is the root of language and Names in collective and Ancestral consciousness. The Celts believed that the language of the angels before the Fall was Celtic; they formed one of the earliest Western churches maintaining some curious ancient practices which were later expurgated by the Roman Church.

If we are to take magical traditions seriously, employing methods such as the UnderWorld Initiation for dynamic changes of individual and group consciousness, we must clean our symbols, and disentangle some of the knotty messes into which the threads of connection have been cast.

The Western consciousness held a combined pagan and primal Christian enlightenment, long before the Roman Church gained political supremacy. It also employed the Tree of Life for realization of this enlightenment long before the mathematical Tree was re-presented to the culture by experimenters such as Raymond Lully during the thirteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

Despite clear evidence of a native tradition with powerful Innerworld contacts and an effective operation involving the Tree of Life in a non-Christian/Hebrew form, occultists still love to encumber their intellects with a language and an alphabet which is unnatural to them! Even the primal Christian contact represented by the esoteric traditions does not insist on Hebrew symbology, or generate it to the inner vision. As a rule, occultists seldom bother to learn Hebrew as a living language, or even to pronounce it correctly within their severely limited and corrupted usage.

The converse of this pathetic situation would be absurd: if Jewish Qabalists insisted on marking *their* Tree of Life in Chinese, or conducting invocations in Swedish — or English.

There may be some value in replacing a known alphabet with a new set of symbols; this clears away difficult connections within words in common use. Whether or not this value arises through exchanging one known language and alphabet for another known language and alphabet is

a different matter. Very few serious workers with symbols have tried to replace magical language and letters with new units and structures, yet this employment of symbolic structures has been well developed in materialist sciences.<sup>10</sup>

A remarkable amount of symbolic connective material can be obtained from free meditation upon the basic Tree of Life, even in its standard modern form, once the outdated and suppressive religious dogma and intellectual inadequacies are removed. One of the more baffling alternative magical languages is the famous Enochian or Angelic code of the Elizabethan magus, Doctor John Dee. This material has been published in various forms, and was employed in a most absurd manner by the Golden Dawn, who, it seems, had not the faintest notion of its meaning or function.<sup>11</sup>

Like a number of glyphs, sigils and other magical or alchemical symbolic languages, Enochian probably depends upon series or rotations of connections upon a common source or ground plan. Similar systems have been developed for musical structures (such as those of Kircher or Fludd), and can still be generated from very simple origins.<sup>12</sup>

Most magical codes arise from affinities, from groups of symbols of simple geometric or directional quality. The analogous nature of magical keys, in which movement in a flat or two-dimensional plan is equal to changes of mode of consciousness in the human world, and to stellar, three-dimensional movement in the cosmos, should not be taken as a serial or hierarchical model. The relationships are illusions within our own limited perception; they occur within our psyche because all time, space and energies are related in a state that we cannot normally grasp. Magic uses this concept inversely, saying that if a flat pattern is an expression of a multi-dimensional property, then we may make analogous symbols in two dimensions to operate in many dimensions. This is not only the basis of magical languages and codes, but is also the basis of many standard and materialist symbol systems.

In the case of Dr Dee's language, the generation of Squares was important. The Tree of Life may be laid out as various squares of related units, and this operation of the Magical Square is widely found in certain magical systems, particularly those with links to the symbols of the classical

Mysteries, or of the mainstream of Hermetic occultism.

All this conceptual material seems far removed in both spirit and substance from published occult texts. In most of these, the use of a language not actually spoken by the magicians and not rooted socially or psychologically in their life relationships (Hebrew) was compounded by the use of another language that was not spoken by anyone at all, as it was a cryptic key system (Enochian). Doctor Dee must have been delighted, during his forays into seership, if he saw the self-styled adepts of our century wallowing in such grotesque confusion. But Dee himself was not a participant in the direct Seership, as far as we know, for he employed codified analogous systems, which then had to be decoded, and of course used a presumed clairvoyant in the character of Edward Kelly. Despite this intellectual approach, we may detect traces of quite ancient magic in Dee's activities, such as his naming of a daughter after a Spirit in true pagan incarnatory style.<sup>13</sup>

If we strip all the nonsense away, and ruthlessly excise the fuddled glamour of ignorant mysteries from the Tree of Life, we find a primal symbol structure which was known to our ancestors. We also find a sophisticated model that shows patterns of relationship, and this is the only genuine power and value of the familiar Glyph in general publication. These relationships may be applied both physically and metaphysically.

Those who have used the Tree of Life through the centuries, in either or in both representations, Hermetic or Orphic, have done so for the purpose of extending communication between the worlds of consciousness. In magical language, we use it to talk to Beings in other Worlds of existence.

The Tree acts not only as an indicator of passage from world to world, standing upon the thresholds, but also as a translating medium.

Writers of both fact and fiction have long developed the idea that communication with extra-terrestrial beings will arise through a common mathematical medium or set of media related in new modes. The Tree of Life does exactly this, acting as pan-cultural and metapsychological bridge. It is not employed for talking to 'outer space', however, but to

Inner space, where it operates as a very effective translation and transformation device. This wide function of interface and translation is merely a side-effect of the cosmic analogy, and arises from the geometric order of the flat and spherical models, attuning them to higher orders which we cannot generally visualize.

It is amusing to find the Tree of Life appearing even in the most fashionable and condescending books on psychology, aimed at the pulp publishing market. In *Games People Play*, by Eric Berne M.D. (published by Penguin), we find the basic magical glyphs of the Tree, offered as if the author has no inkling of their enduring background through centuries of publication. We are not informed whether he has developed the structures out of his own intuition, or if he has taken them from Qabalistic sources without quoting their origins. In either case, his illustrations are undeniably the ancient and established Tree of Life.

### **The Universal Tree**

The Tree appears in three aspects or modes, during three successive stages of the UnderWorld Journey:

1. The Tree of Indication, Initiation or Commencement, which marks the Gateway or first transition from outward consciousness to inner consciousness moving in a defined direction;
2. the Tree of Transformation, found within the UnderWorld garden or orchard;
3. the Universal Tree.

Each of these modes merges harmonically into the other, and we should not expect hard and fast separations and definitions during experience of their consciousness. The boundaries are those defined both by personal experience and the instruction of tradition, and are not intended as 'degrees' or 'grades', or even as measures of self-development in personal assessment. The Universal Tree, being universal, may occur during flashes of understanding at or before the presentation of the first Tree, and the entire cycle may be worked and reworked within the Innerworlds, offering widely varied results. We are concerned at present only with

the catalytic reactions of the first experience of the UnderWorld sequence, as these are the most significant to the practising magician, and should reattune the psyche radically. Subsequent working and refinements are a matter of personal research and dedication.

Each of the Three Trees may be represented by the well-known Qabalistic Tree of Life for meditation purposes, but only if the origins and content of this pan-cultural glyph are understood.

In imagery: the Tree of Indication bears a Guardian; the Tree of Transformation bears Fruit. The Universal Tree alone is represented by the proportional or geometric imagery commonly published. Operation of the earlier stages seems to be little known or practised among modern occultists, and therefore they cannot bring the third mode into active operation.

Upon encountering the first expression of the Tree, the Traveller should recognize its true nature, in order to Pass Within. It may be a glimpse of flames among green branches; it may be a serpent form that is in truth a child or beloved one in altered shape. In more dynamic encounters, the Guardian is clearly defined, often in a terrifying aspect that may not be avoided. This type of encounter does not lead to destruction or damage if it is failed, but to something far worse. If our fear prevents us from passing the Guardian, we cannot enter the Innerworlds effectively, and remain imprisoned in the demonic state of false values.

Encountering the second Tree, the Traveller now sees the Fruit for the first time. This is the cycle of power that animates and activates the outer human world above, but shown in an undisguised form. The Traveller immediately seeks to pluck the Fruit! In the traditional ballad of Thomas the Rhymer, from which much of the UnderWorld Initiation may be summarized before undertaking actual experience, Thomas is redeemed from the folly of plucking the fruit. *His redemption occurs because he wishes to pluck the fruit as a gift for the Dark Queen of Elfland.* In exchange for his devotion and his approach to her power, she warns him of the dangers inherent in his unmitigated desire.

As we shall discover when we analyse this ballad in depth, if Thomas merely plucks the Fruit for himself, he suffers

'all the ills of the world' and 'all the plagues of hell'. He would be misappropriating power into the unsuitable and ineffective vessel — his untransformed self.

To gain the Universal Tree, the Fruit must be transformed or exchanged before it is consumed. This arises through a Female Power, responding to genuine sacrificial acts of love on the part of the human supplicant. In the 'Thomas' variant, the mass ritual is implied, as the Queen of Elfland exchanges the Fruit for Bread and Wine. This operation is not derived from the Christian Communion, but is an echo of an older rite which the Communion incorporated.

The element of Love is explicit in the pagan presentations of the Mystery; Travellers such as Thomas make love to the Queen of Elfland, resting with his head in her lap; in 'Tam Lin' it is love that reclaims the hero from Elfland; in many other variants of the theme it is Love as a power that calls back the Dead, the ensorcelled, or the Innerworld catalytic union. In this mode, Love may or may not be sexual as we understand it; it partakes of physical generative love, but also of an exchange of energies on a metasexual level, employing magical laws of polarity.

During the third phase, expressed as the Universal Tree, a third mode of Love arises, activating the Traveller with an impersonal compassion. Upon the Universal Tree, all powers and exchanges fuse together within the individual as balanced Archetypes; he or she becomes a Mediator.

By eating of the changed Fruit, the Initiate receives the gifts of the UnderWorld: the Tongue that Cannot Lie; a Mantle of Green; and in some cases a Harp. The purified understanding is able to generate no illusion, it is attuned to the Land, and may pass on wisdom through the power of music and song.

The third Tree is the Tree of Mediation. Here the initiate is Realized, made real, the UnderWorld powers are brought through the physical body; attuned to the planet, the sun-system, and the stars.

The returned Traveller is able to mediate such powers by the analogy of the reflected Tree of Life within his or her own body. This physical body has become Transformed through purification in the UnderWorld; through the manifestation via the psychic routes of deep Inner energies and reactions.

It is only by a full realization of the Tree of Life within the whole structure of awareness, right through to physical manifestation, that we may claim operation of the Universal Tree. Modern Westernized Qabalah is incomplete because it lacks the UnderWorld transformative elements that activate the Tree symbol.

Mere intellectual study of correspondances cannot generate the magical transformations. Mere arousal of energies without a balancing exchange (sacrifice in its proper sense, rather than that of submission to authority or dogma), will not enable the transformations.

In traditional magical parlance, the Universal Tree blossoms as an awakening of balanced relationship between the Microcosm, within humankind, and the Macrocosm, the Divine Universe. More practically, it manifests as the energies of the Solar Entity flowing through the Human Entity (individually or collectively) into the Planetary Being.

It is in this context that we must approach the tradition of the Fallen Archangel. *This Being is within the physical matter of the Planet or planets.* Only Humankind can mediate higher awareness to that Fallen matter, for it is At One with our physical body.

The Hope of the Land lies within Man and Woman.  
The Hope of Man and Woman lies within the Son of  
Light.

The Son of Light is At One with the Guardian in the  
UnderWorld:

And with the Sun and Stars in the Overworld.

We have repeatedly stressed that the Ancestors and the Land are At One in the perfect Archetypical UnderWorld. The Redeemer and the Guardian are likewise At One in that realm. If a human Traveller passes the Guardian to unite with the Son of Light, this is truly a conscious merging of the Universe and the UnderWorld, through the physical body.

If sufficient individuals achieved this transformation, the nature of our group world would change dramatically — not through religion, information technology or revolution, but through the inevitable effect of altered energies feeding

into its constructional matrix. The true Archetypes are plastic; the devolved Archetypes may be remoulded.

The energies that provide the driving force for the Traveller are those of the aroused power centres of the body, known traditionally as the Inner Fire. There is an important difference between the awakening of this power for personal ends, and awakening in the Name of the Son of Light, the Beautifying and Redeeming Figure of both pagan and Christian metaphysics. We touched upon this difference during the Summoning of the Ancestors, which is enabled by the kindling of Inner Fire.

The personal arousal and the transpersonal arousal are unified by the Journey through the UnderWorld. Our Universal Tree is a matrix model that encompasses the ideal worlds of Origination and the human world of devolved consciousness; but its roots are in the UnderWorld, which lies below devolution.

Metaphysically, we might say that the Worlds are not attuned to their Originative models, and physically we find that the energy patterns shown upon the Tree do not automatically exist within the human vessel. This is the result of the so-called 'Fall from Grace'. Effectively, it means that many of the theories of Inner Fire, yoga, energy centres, and incorporation of the Tree within the psyche and bio-energies, simply cannot be made to work properly. We must undergo some radical preparation before this situation can be changed.

The Grace inferred is no sterile set of matrices or pure originative ideation; these matrices are only sterile because something is missing from them. In the fallen worlds the aroused energies are dissipated and wasted through lack of balanced paths or circuits; in the higher worlds the archetypal models and pure shapes provide these paths, but are useless without the energies that are removed from them by the devolution.

The sexual powers, aroused within humankind, are the missing elements that Realize the Archetypes; the Archetypes are the missing matrices that Enable the energies of the human to become Divine. Once again it must be stressed that 'sexual' is used in the sense of the interplay of polarized energies, male to female, positive to negative,



outer to inner, and not to mean only physical intercourse or sensual gratification. In the advanced magical polarity structures, there is a complex 'sexual' interplay in which sensual arousal is transcended for exchanges of a quite different order. This occurs within the single psyche just as effectively as it does in the magical group.

Before the unification of the Matrices and the Energies may be made, the shell or accumulated matter of many lifetimes must be broken down, reduced from its random coagulated structure, and reassembled.

This Shell takes the shape of the physical body, mental and emotional tendencies as shown in the astrological chart, and the more temporary conditioned aspects of the personality. Such components coagulate in distorted shapes, often reassembling with increased strength in a series of reincarnations.

In standard astrology it is often assumed that the relationships shown in the chart define modes of expression available during the lifetime of the individual.<sup>14</sup> The esoteric traditions teach that the entity gravitates towards chosen sequences in the astrological synchronicity, which will bring it to birth in the circumstances most suited to its requirements.

A self-perpetuating phantom 'personality' may retain its entity through more than one life-cycle, therefore. The method may also be employed by liberated or balanced souls; in ancient magical workings, specific planetary or stellar patterns were employed to aid incarnation. This was not because the conjunctions *caused* certain Beings to appear in the physical world, but because the conjunction was identical to the nature of the Being, enabling it to manifest within the womb, and to be born at a harmonically related point and place.

The cells of the human body constantly die and are renewed. The physical entity is replaced regularly during a lifetime; the holding power of resistance and individuality is not physical unity, but the Imagination. It is the self-image that causes the body to crystallize according to the cyclical laws of the world of nature, and it is this self-image which must die during the passage through the UnderWorld. The self-image, expressed superficially by the personality mask,

is one of the lower functions of Imagination.

The un-energized patterns of the Tree of Life or of the power centres of esoteric psycho-biology cannot be intellectually opened up. To attempt to merge the Divine and the Diabolic (if we may express the operation in old-fashioned terms) through intellect alone is absurd and imbalanced. The key lies in sacrifice and in Transformation.

One set of energies (the self-image) is willingly offered up to be consumed and transformed into a new set (the Higher Self of traditional occultism). This essential process must not be confused with the pernicious notions of 'sacrifice' 'humility' and 'service' which are used in a corrupt manner by orthodox religion to induce slavery and spiritual degradation.

During the UnderWorld Initiation, the energies are consumed by Innerworld beings, and are exchanged, transformed, and returned after a different manner. This is no more than a harmonic of the action that occurs in all life, from cellular growth and decay, to consumption of food for higher energies, to sexual union. It is at the stage of physical intercourse that the exchanges become less visible, but more potent. Creative arts and scientific discoveries manifest slowly but no less dynamically, with far-reaching effects in time. Magic is merely one small step further Within than these, while beyond magic there are other modes of exchange yet again.

This application of relationship to Innerworld Beings is the open secret of the Western Tradition, radically different from Eastern methods and from group religious worship. It is an operative mode, a method, and not an end in itself. If it becomes an end rather than a means, it is merely a higher form of sensuality; that same higher form which is clear to see in religious Heavens and Paradises.

The Universal Tree, therefore, is gained by experience. It may appear intellectually to be nothing more than a published 'Tree of Life', but in practice it is very different.

The Tree appears in various modes within our awareness prior to transmutation or transformation; it occurs in all such modes simultaneously after the UnderWorld Initiation. The Traveller has a regular presence in the ordinary group world, yet lives in a very different and transformed world as a

result of the Journey.

In the intellect, the Tree may be an instructional model, used to educate and elucidate. All good teachers have the ability to channel their enlightenment into clear communication, and the Tree is used for this purpose.

Although Mystery plays an important part in esoteric traditions, mystification does not.

In the emotions, the Universal Tree represents a turning about of the emotional flow, a re-polarization of the psyche. Before transformation, we are prey to our emotions, not only our crude selfish urges and storms, but the so-called higher emotions such as religious love of a God or Goddess. The Journey shatters these complex patterns; they are seen in their true light, as Poisons. Paradoxically, the Universal Tree regenerates the emotions after their catalysis.

While we are smothered in our mask, our 'personality' the emotions and the intellect flow willy-nilly. We act out stereotyped roles and little dramas not only for others, but to gratify separated areas of our psyche in self-assuring solitary vice. At the Tree of Initiation, we find this state embodied in a powerful Opponent, who is by no means limited or shaped by our flawed personality, for he or she may be an independent entity acting as a psychopomp.

In the UnderWorld, these energies are found to be the fruit of the generative power that urges all Being out of non-Being. By interaction, they are Transformed.

Finally, the third and Universal Tree is realized. The emotions flow *outwards* in a purified stream. There is no mask or filter between the emotions and the deeper energizing levels; love *of* others becomes love *for* others; people are no longer seen as possessions or as audience members for the personal melodrama.

This is no vague reverie, but an expression of dynamic energy that no longer manifests through the generative organs, unless so chosen. The inner and outer consciousness are merged as one, employing the physical energies and the psychic and deeper spiritual energies in a harmonious pattern.

It is at this stage that words are insufficient; music and poetry may act as bridges for this consciousness, inciting momentary flashes of inspiration. The aim of the spiritual

sciences is to increase the incidence of such flashes until they become a steady flame. Like the flaming Tree of Celtic legend, this fire co-exists with the physical branch of green leaves; they are one and the same, the Universal Tree.



**Part Two:**  
**Foundations of the**  
**Hidden Tradition in**  
**Song and Balladry**



## 9.

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# **The Foundations**

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Many of the examples in this second Part are referred to in the main text of the preceding pages. Each example carries a set of notes for direct reference after the song text.

In most cases, the text is from oral tradition in Britain or the United States, as collected and noted down by folklore researchers in the field. Some of the ballads come from earlier literary collections, such as the authoritative work of Professor Francis James Child. A few of the ballads and songs offered are still active in modern remnants of the oral tradition on both sides of the Atlantic, though not necessarily in the exact variant given here.

No attempt has been made to find 'original' or 'full' versions of these texts, as such versions do not exist. The oral tradition is protean, and is defined by archetypes rather than by original unitary compositions. Variants are sometimes quoted in the notes, and the reader must make the effort to read and to listen to these songs and ballads in depth. The tradition does not come alive as a literary diversion, in the same way as magic and music or poetry do not succeed as 'hobbies'.

The reference works on folksong and folklore listed in the Notes will provide a vast body of additional and comparable material, most of which is impossible to include in a small work of this nature. The variants used here are intended as examples of the manifest group tradition, as working



models of the magical, psychological and metaphysical lore dealt with in the first part of the book. They must be carefully compared to the medieval Histories and Romances, and to the Grail literature; to alchemical and magical work in both public and private sources; and to Celtic and classical mythology.

The ballads do not stand alone; they are the roots that feed the flowering branches of Western tradition, and as such they are buried below the surface of the shared imagination.

Ballad material is stark to the point of cruelty; nothing is spared. It is concentrated and highly polished, so the reader with a modern habit of seeking for developed plots and characterization can easily miss developments. Major changes of direction and key events are transmitted in tiny spaces; it is not difficult to overlook implications and magical symbols or actions.

In their original cultural ambience, such ballads were repeatedly sung from generation to generation, forming part of the fabric of seasonal communal life. The absorption of the content was on a habitual and unconscious level, inter-related to a wide oral tradition and a wealth of cross-references that we have all but lost today.

It is preferable to hear these ballads sung. Ideally they must be sung by a genuine traditional singer, or perhaps heard from a recording of such a singer made in the field of folksong collection. Failing this, though many such 'field recordings' do exist, we could settle for a performance from a folksong enthusiast, or a professional singer specializing in good interpretations of traditional song and music. Such versions are fraught with ignorance and unsympathetic treatment, some to the point of callous bad taste. The new listener to folksong has a difficult series of choices, and will have to learn to distinguish the spirit from the letter of folksong performance in revival.

A ballad without music is similar to a body without a soul; it is all present, but has no breath to animate it. Ideally a selection of this sort should be in the form of a series of recordings; a discography is included at the end of the book.

The texts used here are not definitive; they are merely the most obvious that meet the requirements of the exposition, each containing symbols of the UnderWorld Initiation, from

common consciousness. It has often been suggested that folk ballads form the remains of a coherent but disarranged body of material, and that if we could restore the original texts and order, we would have the wisdom of our Ancestors complete.

This seems unlikely, and is limiting in the same way that the theory of conspiracy restricts our imagination and deadens our fight for liberty. The rotational spiralling patterns of the ballad plots (and the melody shapes) interconnect through a creative magical function of human consciousness. They were never 'written' as a 'whole' body.

One of the most damaging attacks that can be made upon a tradition is to 'restore' it, or to 'prove' an original model. There is no proof, no orthodox version; the forms recreate themselves from Archetypal matrices, using the symbolism of the people and of the land. If a ballad could be restored to some non-existent original, or if a magical secret could be proven, they would be worthless shells.

Restoration implies the withdrawal of the vivifying spirit into another world, leaving only a shadow behind, or a ruin to be faked into a semblance of life. Such a restoration can only be made within ourselves, by bringing our own imaginations alive with the traditional symbols. This may be the slow dreamlike process of the collective imagination, or it may be the lightning stroke of energized magical work, or the balanced development of years of meditation. The restoration cannot be intellectualized upon external objects.

This magical truth, which like all magical truths is really common sense, reveals the triviality of teachers, authors and schools who claim to reveal great secrets, hierarchies of worship, magical-historical plots in politics and other similar dross.

Let us now enter the utterly unproven and open-ended world of the ballads; we shall pass where the clues to the UnderWorld are casually left lying under Trees, guarded by Beasts, held by the Queen of Elfland, stolen by Lovers, strung upon Harps, and sung by Fools.

## **Song Examples and Commentaries**

### **THE LEAVES OF LIGHT**

*Traditional English Carol*

Under the leaves and the leaves of light,  
I met with virgins seven,  
One of them was Mary mild,  
Our Lord's first Mother in Heaven.

'Oh where are you going, you seven pretty maids,  
All under the leaves of light?'  
'It's we are going, Thomas,' they said,  
'Seeking for a friend of thine.'

'Oh you go down into yonders town  
And sit in the gallery,  
It's there you'll see sweet Jesus Christ  
Nailed to a big yew tree.'

So they went down into yonders town,  
To sit in the gallery,  
And there they saw sweet Jesus Christ,  
Nailed to a big yew tree.

'Oh do not weep for me, Mother,  
Oh do not for me grieve,  
For it's I must suffer this,' he said,  
'For Adam and for Eve.'

'Ah how can I my weeping cease,  
My sorrows all forgo,  
When I shall see my own son die,  
And sons I shall have no more?'

He's laid his head on his right shoulder,  
And death soon drew him nigh,  
'May the Holy Ghost receive thy soul,  
Sweet Mother now I die.'

Oh the rose and the gentle rose,  
And the fennel that grows so strong,  
Amen, dear Lord, and charity,  
Is the ending of my song.

### **The Leaves of Light**

A curious mixture of medieval Christian and pagan lore, this carol preserves several important elements of the UnderWorld tradition. Of particular significance are the following:

#### *1. The Leaves of Light*

'The leaves of light' or 'leaves of life' are typical of the Otherworld or UnderWorld Tree. Examples of this Tree are found repeatedly in Celtic folklore, and its presence in a small group of ballads and songs with magical or religious overtones offers coherent symbolism. The songs themselves are not consciously related, but the repeated Tree motif suggests derivation from an original symbol which pre-dates the intellectual adaptations of the Hebrew Qabalah in literary and speculative European magic or theosophy.

#### *2. The Seven Virgins*

The magical Tree repeatedly utilizes the number seven. In the Scottish ballad 'The Lailly Worm', seven brave knights are slain by a serpent or dragon. In Hebrew Qabalah, the Serpent encompasses the seven lower Sephiroth of the numerical Tree of Life. In many traditions pertaining to

magic, mysticism and the subtle energies of the human entity, seven power centres are taught, or activated within the student. According to the standard theory of correspondences, these are microcosmically attuned to the energies of the Seven Planets. The UnderWorld or Hidden Tradition teaches a variant of the above which suggests that the Seven Planets are, in fact, reflections of seven primal archetypes found by passing Below.

### 3. *Mary Virgin*

Mary Virgin is placed with the seven lower Virgins, we should note, in this song. She is not, therefore, the Great Mother Deep, but the Virgin Mother of the Moon in her non-fertile phase. Her lament is typical of that of many pre-Christian fertility rites well discussed in comparative mythology or anthropology.

### 4. *The Yew Tree*

Jesus Christ is not nailed to a Cross, but to a 'big Yew Tree'. The yew, traditional churchyard tree in England, is connected with the lore of the dead, the UnderWorld, and therefore of the Ancestors.

### 5. *Suffering for Adam and Eve*

This typical Christian dogma is revealed in a new light when the common symbolism of this carol and various other examples discussed is further compared to the heretical story of the origin of the Tree of Life, found within the Grail cycle.

### 6. *Flower symbolism*

The apparently irrelevant flower symbolism is a common element in many folksongs, ranging from mere poetical fancy to assuming a central function, a key to the action of magical events. In the present example, the Rose is an identifying symbol which is particularly relevant to unorthodox (primal or revolutionary) Christianity. Fennel is traditionally the curative herb for the bite of serpents, poisons, and for easing other afflictions to the flow of blood.

This two-fold flower symbolism may be found in the Scottish ballad of 'Tam Lin', where the maiden pulls a double rose to summon her lover from the Otherworld, and later pulls a 'grey spotted herb' in an attempt to abort her magical child.

*7. Blend of literary and non-literary elements*

'The Leaves of Life' is one of a small number of heretical or esoteric Christian songs found from an oral tradition. Yet within the preserving realm of the tradition, it is possible to detect many 'literary' or contrived influences, particularly where orthodox religious beliefs have been welded to a more ancient lore. Other typical examples would be 'The Seven Joys of Mary', 'The Dilly Song', 'Down in Yon Forest', 'The Cherry Tree Carol' and 'The Bitter Withy'. These, and other similar Christian/Pagan songs all suggest a prolonged attempt at either altering heretical lore within the common tradition to force it into an orthodox mould, or the wilful confusion of such lore with regular religious belief. History avers the first to be the true process, from the mission of Augustine onwards; but tradition implies that the second may be nearer the mark, though not as a planned or underground cult activity.

## YOUNG TAM LIN

*Traditional Scottish ballad*

The King forbade his maidens a'  
That wore gold in their hair  
To come and go by Carterhaugh,  
For the young Tam Lin is there.

And those that go by Carterhaugh  
From them he takes a fee,  
Either their rings or their mantles  
Or else their maidenheads!

So Janet has kilted her green mantle  
Just a little above her knee,  
And she has gone to Carterhaugh  
Just as fast as she could flee.

She had not pulled a double rose,  
A rose but three or four,  
When up and spoke this young Tam Lin,  
Crying 'Lady, pull no more!'

'How dare you pull those flowers!  
How dare you break those wands!  
How dare you come to Carterhaugh  
Withouten my command?'

She says, 'Carterhaugh it is my own  
My Father gave it me,  
And I will come and go by here  
Withouten any leave of thee!'

There were four and twenty ladies gay  
All sitting down at chess,  
In and come the fair young Janet,  
As pale as any glass.

Up and spake her father dear,  
He spake up meek and mild,  
'Oh alas, Janet,' he cried,  
'I fear you go with child!'

'And if I go with child,  
It is myself to blame!  
There's not a lord in all your hall  
Shall give my child his name!'

Janet has kilted her green mantle  
Just a little above her knee,  
And she has gone to Carterhaugh  
For to pull the scathing tree.

'How dare you pull that herb  
All among the leaves so green  
For to kill the bonny babe  
That we got us between!'

'You must tell to me Tam Lin,  
Ah you must tell to me,  
Were you once a mortal knight  
Or mortal hall did see?'

'I was once a mortal knight  
I was hunting here one day,  
I did fall from off my horse,  
The Fairy Queen Stole me away.

'And pleasant is the Fairyland  
But a strange tale I'll tell,  
For at the end of seven years  
They pay a fine to Hell.



'At the end of seven years  
They pay a fine to Hell,  
And as I am of mortal flesh  
I fear it is myself.'

'Tomorrow night is Halloween,  
And the Fairy Folk do ride;  
Those that would their true love win  
At Miles Cross they must hide!

'First you let pass the black horse  
Then you let pass the brown,  
But run up to the milk white steed  
And pull the rider down.

'First they'll change me in your arms  
Into some snake or adder,  
Hold me close and fear me not,  
For I'm your child's father.

'Then they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a lion wild,  
Hold me close and fear me not  
As you would hold your child.

'Then they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a red-hot bar of iron,  
Hold me close and fear me not  
For I will do no harm.

'Then they'll turn me in your arms  
Into some burning lead,  
Throw me into well-water  
And throw me in with speed.

'Last they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a naked knight  
Wrap me up in your green mantle,  
And hide me close from sight.'

So well she did what he did say  
She did her true love win,  
She wrapped him up in her mantle,  
As blythe as any bird in Spring.

Up and spake the Fairy Queen,  
 And angry cried she,  
 'If I'd have known of this Tam Lin,  
 That some lady'd borrowed thee,  
 'If I had known of this Tam Lin,  
 That some lady borrowed thee,  
 I'd have plucked out thine eyes of flesh  
 And put in eyes from a tree!  
 'If I'd have known of this Tam Lin,  
 Before we came from home,  
 I'd have plucked out thine heart of flesh  
 And put in a heart of stone!'

### **Young Tam Lin**

This ballad, found only in Scottish tradition, is of major importance to a full realization of the UnderWorld Tradition. Many of the broader esoteric implications of the text are dealt with in our main exposition, but the following elements are particularly significant.

#### *1. Maidens with gold in their hair*

The heroine is a virgin within a collection of virgins.

#### *2. Green mantle*

Wearing of green is associated with magic, witchcraft and fertility. 'A green gown' is the traditional term for rustic defloration, and overall the wearing of green is associated with earth-magic. Thomas the Rhymer is given clothing of green by the Queen of Elfland. The significance within the Tradition is that the wearing of Green signifies unity with the Land. Janet's virgin state, therefore, is no mere human condition, but declares her to be a character such as the epiphanies of the Goddess or Spirit of the Land that occur in early Celtic poetical convention. It is her true love that later wins Tam Lin back to humanity.

#### *3. Pulling of Flowers*

Tam Lin is summoned by pulling of roses and the breaking of branches. He is therefore an Otherworld Guardian (see page 102) who may be summoned or aroused through magic

connected to Nature. He states that none should come to Carterhaugh without his own command, and we note from verse 2 that he takes a fee from trespassers. His role is that of the ex-human attuned to an environmental site by magical power. At this stage, he appears as a threatening being to unwitting visitors to his hill (Carterhaugh). Janet, however, lays claim to the site, *through the gift of her father the King*.

#### 4. Carterhaugh

As with other examples from Scottish tradition, Carterhaugh is an actual location, in Selkirkshire. The insistence upon actual locations in the outer-world is central to the Tradition. In Walter Scott's day, local people insisted that 'fairy rings' upon Carterhaugh, which stands at the conflux of the rivers Yarrow and Ettrick, were evidence of the magical struggle for liberty. Similar traditions are linked to the Reverend Robert Kirk of Aberfoyle, and to Thomas of Erledoune, both historical characters with documented backgrounds. In other parts of Britain, folk tradition has often been proven by archaeological excavation, particularly where local customs and tales provide rationalizations that preserve memory of pre-Christian worship and burial sites.

#### 5. Tam Lin is both physical and non-physical

In various versions of the ballad, verses occur (not included in the text above) which present the dual nature of Tam Lin — his presence in both worlds.

When she came to Carterhaugh  
 Tam Lin was at the well  
 And there she found his steed standing  
 But away was himsel.

This duality occurs again in verses where Tam Lin and Janet make love, during which she 'falls in a mist' and her lover is both present and 'away'. In several variants of the story, Tam Lin is enchanted at or by a magical Well. His horse may be found by the well, as a sign or totem symbol of his presence, but he is present *in another dimension*, that of Elfland, Fairyland, the Otherworld or UnderWorld. He is summoned by the pulling of roses, and it should be noted in this context that plants and trees are the routes whereby

spirits are enabled to return to the womb for rebirth, in primal tradition.

#### *6. Janet becomes pregnant*

Despite Tam Lin's seeming insubstantiality, Janet 'goes with child', and will not acknowledge any mortal origin for her condition. This pregnancy is significant in several ways, over and above the obvious allusion to pagan fertility magic. There is a strong parallel between Janet's pregnancy 'in a mist' and the actual translation of Tam Lin from Fairyland. The ballads imply that the two processes are possibly united or analogous. Folk tradition does not necessarily discriminate between magical location of beings, the spirits of the dead, and the birth of children. From an esoteric viewpoint, within the more subtle teachings of the Tradition, the popular lore is not, in fact, 'confused'. Nor are we suggesting that the ballad lore is merely a folk restatement of the so-called 'laws of reincarnation', for the true implication of the Tradition is one of synchronicity and correspondence through more than one world, with primary motivations devolving from a key archetype that may be expressed in more than one mode.

#### *7. Four-and-twenty ladies gay*

The chess-playing ladies or maidens appear in several variants in 'Tam Lin'. They are often placed in Fairyland, as an example of the joys of that place. In our particular version of the ballad, they are at the court of the King, but in either case they represent the collection of feminine powers at work. Chess, it should be remembered, was no mere diversion, but a magical or cosmological game in Celtic culture. The regular appearance of chess-playing maidens in ancient lore, both folk and literary, may suggest that they are 'fates' or operative powers of creation and destruction.

#### *8. Janet seeks for Tam Lin*

In the variant given above, Janet seeks to abort her child by pulling a specific herb. The presence of plants of fertility and of abortive power is common in traditional material, for all the obvious reasons; but there is a magical element or correspondence at work in this juxtaposition of herbs

which should not be ignored.

What is particularly significant in this context is Janet's motivation for her actions. She has refused to acknowledge any mortal knight as father of her child, even hinting at a supernatural or immaculate conception ('And if I go with child,/ It is myself to blame! . . .'), yet she seeks to abort, and so summons Tam Lin. As soon as he appears, she asks him his *origins*, either his mortality, or in some variants, his Christianity.

It is worth reconsidering the action that precedes this event.

- (a) Janet wilfully seeks the enchanted hill or well, having been warned that Tam Lin will take a fee, or her maidenhead.
- (b) She summons him intentionally by pulling roses.
- (c) They become lovers; in some versions in a magical mist.
- (d) Janet returns home, and discovers that she is pregnant.
- (e) She refuses to be married off to a mortal, and returns to Carterhaugh, 'to pull the scathing tree'.
- (f) Tam Lin appears to stop her aborting the child.
- (g) *She asks him his identity, his true origin.*

Janet's question is the key to the whole magical process. Prior to the Question, Tam Lin is a Guardian of the sacred hill, well or roses. He will impregnate maidens, after the manner of the ancient 'fertility Mysteries', and then disappear. Note that the result of 'pulling forbidden roses' is pregnancy; but this is not a moralistic or Christian warning by any means. Pregnancy results from pulling Roses without permission from the Guardian — in other words, perpetuating the blind powers of procreation without understanding.

To gain permission from the Guardian, one has to know his Name, which in magical operations involves *asking the correct questions*. Indeed, the 'Name' is the sum of all the answers to the correct questions, and is a quality or mode of awareness rather than a mere label.

Janet seeks, therefore, to *stop* the regular cycle of creation, by her act of abortion. This willed turning away from the regular flow of events summons Tam Lin. Unlike his last manifestation, he is immediately trapped by her magical

Question, which is '*What is your origin?*' From this turning point, the entire tone and direction of the ballad changes. The Otherworld Guardian reveals his true nature: that of an enchanted man entrapped within a magical realm and cycle from which he cannot escape by his own efforts.

It is suddenly obvious that Janet has *used the threat of abortion* (in other words, a willed refusal of regular patterns) to cause Tam Lin to reveal himself — but also that he has, in fact, been awaiting a maiden who will make the challenge, so that he may reveal the mode of his disenchantment.

### 9. Tam Lin reveals his true nature

Whereas in the version given above, Tam Lin 'falls from off his horse', other variants offer more revealing causes of his enchantment. He falls asleep under an apple tree, he passes through a magical chapel, or is overcome by sleep at a magical well. As a result of this he is captured by the Queen of Elfland. In other words, he passes into the UnderWorld while retaining his human origins. He makes the transition while in a sleep or trance, partly unwitting, without full command of his consciousness. His role of Guardian fulfilling a stereotyped mode of magical behaviour, is the direct result of his automatic or unwilled enchantment. Until he is released from this first phase of his Transmutation, he will act as phantom or guardian of the physical site to which he has become attuned.

The power of his release is 'true love', represented by Fair Janet. The lack of distinction between her pregnancy and the manifestation of Tam Lin is significant in this context, for if she cannot redeem him in his original form, from the Otherworld, she will eventually bring him to birth after his entity has been broken down and destroyed (paid as a fine to Hell). The key concept here is *Man is Redeemed by Woman*, a concept which is repeated in the heretical Grail cycle.

As with Janet's challenge to gain Tam Lin's secret, her magical rescue is a willed alteration of the normal or expected pattern of events. In the first example, she turns against the laws of natural cause and effect in the outer world, by rejecting the so-called 'inevitable', the wheel of procreation. Her second challenge, however, is on an inner or magical level, whereby she moves against the current of

the unseen powers, and seeks to suspend their cycle of operations also. She is stealing Tam Lin from the Fairies — operating the magic known as ‘the Path of the Thief’.

#### 10. *The nature of Fairyland and the Fine to Hell*

Tam Lin’s description of Fairyland is heavily coloured by those of the Celtic Paradise. In many versions of the ballad, the pleasures of the Land are described, and one wonders why the hero might wish to leave!

‘At the end of seven years/ They pay a fine to Hell.’ Tam Lin is aware that his time in Fairyland is limited — and the implications of this are far beyond the nursery level or guilt-ridden perversion of truth offered by a superficially Christian interpretation of the sequence.

It has been customary to rationalize the ballad by suggesting that the Fairy folk stole Tam Lin to keep him as a sacrifice to the Devil, in order that their Paradisical state could be perpetuated.

Tam Lin is actually seeking a way free from the Wheel, on an inner or magical level. He acts as Guardian of a power or sacred site (in this case linked to fertility), and despite the timeless and dreamlike quality of the state in which he finds himself, it is only a more subtle variant of the outer world.

At the end of a given period, he is offered up to the Powers of Destruction. As has been discussed at length in the chapter analysing the Guardian, this is only normal. Every entity experiences this power of dissolution upon physical death.

In Tam Lin’s case, he is singled out in a magical or *intermediate* role, so his cycle is not that of regular birth—life—death—rebirth. His entity, his self-awareness, is active in the Otherworld, through magical attunement to a function connected with the Land and fertility. He is honoured in this role by the beings that occupy the Otherworld, wherein his dual nature is given special consideration.

‘I Tam-a-Line, on milk white steed,  
A gold star in my crown,  
Because I was an earthly knight  
They gave me this renown.’

As has been mentioned above, Tam Lin can only remain in his magical role for a certain period of time. At the end of that period he is offered up to Hell, or becomes subject to the powers of dissolution inherent in the UnderWorld. Following this second death, he can only be reborn as a mortal child, and commence again upon the Wheel.

Once challenged, however, Tam Lin is able to reveal a way by which he might be liberated through Transformation. As with other male characters in magic, he is incomplete without the female partner, and unable to Transform without the vitalizing fire of Janet's love.

### *11. The transformation at Halloween*

The most obvious magical elements now begin to appear in the ballad. Janet must save her lover at Halloween — the festival which marks the ancient feast of the Dead. At this time, the barriers between the outer and UnderWorld were said to be weakened, and the dead could freely approach the living. Additionally, it was at this time that the Wild Hunt gathered in the souls of the Dead — a period of transition. We can see from this significant use of Halloween a further reinforcement of the connection between 'fairy' lore and 'ancestor' lore.

Janet is told to hide at 'Miles Cross', which is sometimes seen as a suggestion of Christian power in her support. Crossroads, however, have an ancient significance, upon which Christianity merely added its own accumulation.

The Crossroads show *centrality within choice*. They are a place where the worlds meet, and the most deep and ancient gods are powers of the crossroads. Apart from the variants in which Janet questions her lover's origin in Christianity, 'Tam Lin' is a non-religious magical ballad. The action is completed by devotion and discipline, not by religious prayers or faith.

The fact that Tam Lin describes in advance the fairy court and the magical transformations is usually taken for granted, but indicates a typical magical operation. The Guardian entities will not only effect magic, within the Tradition, but they will also display, or inform the magician in advance, in an educative or helpful role. The simple acquisition of information, however, is not sufficient, for the sequences must be experienced.



In many versions of the ballad, the description is given, then repeated in its entirety during the chronological development of the disenchantment.

Three courts of Elfland are usually described . . . those that ride on black, brown and white horses. These correspond to three orders of inner-world beings in magic, and to three phases of changing matter in alchemy.

### *12. The transformations in effect*

How do the transformations work? We are given a rationalized explanation on the superficial level of the ballad: the *Fairies* change Tam Lin into shapes difficult for Janet to hold, so that they might keep him as their sacrifice to Hell.

There are obviously certain laws at work, as were observed in the earlier stages of the story where Tam Lin was summoned through the pulling of roses. It is clear that the Fairies cannot act directly upon Janet; she is untouchable through her power of true love.

The ritualistic and game-playing aspects of traditional lore are extremely important, for they give considerable information regarding the laws that operate in magic, the inner worlds, and the human entity in its many interlinked aspects.

From the Fairies' state of existence, Fair Janet is not only untouchable, she cannot be seen! Janet is the 'saving Grace', the secret spirit of redemption, and all changes, shapes and later curses are directed at, and through, Tam Lin.

We are following a description, in this ballad, of the interaction between a human being, certain UnderWorld powers, and the mysterious spirit of origination and love. The interaction is catalytic, for until the element of 'grace' or 'redemption' enters the field of operation through love, Tam Lin cannot change. Once this new element is added, his startling transformations occur rapidly, and he is liberated as a new and reborn individual.

The strong links between this old Scottish ballad and the processes of alchemy should be obvious. Both describe a magical sequence of transmutations, effected by laws usually unperceived by mortal men, but nevertheless present and powerful in the heart of matter.

The actual sequence and presentation of the transform-

ations varies considerably from text to text, but all involve the action of the Inner Fire, shape-changing, and purification through apparent destruction.

In his final incandescent transformation, as burning lead, Tam Lin is thrown into well-water (fire plunged into the water of earth) and becomes a naked knight. Janet wraps him in her Green Mantle, and he is transformed and returned to the Earth; she hides him from sight. His final transformation is a return.

### 13. *The curses*

For the first time, the Fairy Queen speaks out, and emits a sequence of curses. These prohibitions are suggestions of Tam Lin's new powers of perception as a Transformed being, and are common to fairy and otherworld folklore. As Tam Lin has been saved from the UnderWorld or Fairy land, he can See into both realms, that of the human and of the non-human. Hence the threat that his eyes would have been plucked out, if only the Queen had known. A similar curse is made regarding his heart, the traditional centre of love. If he had had a heart of *stone*, he might never have been saved!

The malevolence of the Fairy Queen, in 'Tam Lin' is rather different from her role in 'Thomas the Rhymer', but the information derived from both is, in fact, identical.

The comparison between the Queen in 'Tam Lin', and the Queen in 'Thomas the Rhymer' reveals two basic aspects of the UnderWorld. Briefly, the Queen in Tam Lin performs as a deeper level of Guardian or controlling entity at the heart of the inner Mysteries of the UnderWorld or Elfland. She is never approached direct, and no dialogue occurs with her. She is, in fact, operating in the role of an impersonal agency, fulfilling certain laws.

In 'Thomas', however, the Queen is directly concerned in an active dialogue with the Hero, and becomes his redeemer through the offering of his love. In other words, the role of 'Queen' and 'Janet' are merged into one entity in the Thomas story, wherein she prohibits the Hero from worshipping her as 'Queen of Heaven' — for she is *not* the Goddess.

In Tam Lin, the Queen, *not* activated or motivated by true love, can only be a deeper archetype. This concept is central to the practical operation of magic in the UnderWorld, and

should be fully understood before any experiments are attempted.

Indeed, the stories of Tam and Thomas should be seen as two operative variants of the same magical liberation process. In the first, the hero is saved by love from an exterior agency — either human love or divine grace — while in the second he is saved by that same divine power emanating from within himself.

For most of us, the first mode of liberation is the most likely, though the second is the true aim and function of the Tradition. It would not be too daring to suggest that Tam Lin and Thomas may be taken sequentially for magical purposes.

The first ballad represents either a human male-female ritual operation and developed Mystery or the action of divine intervention through the cycles of the Wheel.

The second ballad represents this same use of polarities removed into an inner dimension, where the love-exchange occurs between the initiate and the inner world entity; through which love the divine redemption is activated.

The process described in Thomas, therefore, may be said to be a more advanced or developed means of achieving the Liberation. Indeed, according to the laws of magic, Tam Lin, in his liberated form, has left a wrathful Fairy Queen behind in Elfland, and he is bound to reconcile and balance this state as his task in his new and innocent identity.

## THOMAS THE RHYMER

*A Scottish traditional ballad, based upon a historical person*

Thomas the Rhymer, also known as Lord Learmont, Thomas of Erledoune and 'True Thomas' lived during the thirteenth century. He is an extremely important person in the exposition of the hidden tradition, and forms one of a number of historical persons who may be termed Justified Men. These individuals are not necessarily connected in any fraternal manner, least of all by the spurious nonsense about 'secret orders' that has been forced into commercial popularity in recent years. They are connected through time, however, by a common thread of purpose and symbolic lore.

In magical terms, they are the prophets and teaching masters of the secret Tradition, and may be said to exist metaphysically as a united body of consciousness which has expressed itself through specific members in serial time. Active magical groups who perpetuate genuine oral teaching traditions have various inner-world contacts whom they claim to be members of such a body. These are not, incidentally, mysterious immortals residing in seclusion in the Andes or on Mars, but are the conscious resonance or echo of certain advanced souls who are supposed to be concerned with the problems and spiritual development of those who are their children in outer time.

Whether or not one accepts this more recondite theory

is a matter of indifference, for there are sufficient historical Justified Men within the narrow confines of British tradition, and they have left words, songs, poems and music behind, whereby those who follow in their footsteps through the UnderWorld may be guided.

The list of those mentioned in the preceding pages includes the Reverend Robert Kirk of Aberfoyle, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the anonymous author of the Grail legends, while in more modern times we might include the authors George MacDonald and Charles Williams.

Not all metaphysicians or acclaimed philosophers or holy men belong to this grouping, for not all wisdom is gained through the UnderWorld. The reader should be familiar by now with the hallmarks of the UnderWorld Tradition as suggested, and will be able to find clues in the works of great thinkers and metaphysicians. He or she will also be surprised at the absence of such clues in the works of apparently reputed representatives of Western religion, ethics and philosophy.

Thomas of Ercledoune, therefore, was renowned as a prophet during his own lifetime (and in his own country), and printed versions of his accurate predictions were circulated after his death, some still active as late as the nineteenth century. His pre-vision was the result of the UnderWorld Initiation, gained by his relationship with the Fairy Queen, as described in the famous old ballads and the Romance text which bear his name.

Thomas is also said to be the author of the earliest version of 'Tristram and Iseult', and may be rightly said to have had a far-reaching effect upon literature and upon the common imagination for the last seven hundred years. During the nineteenth century, his published prophecies caused Englishmen to flee to the hills in fear of an imminent disaster — which, unlike many of his quite accurate predictions, did not occur.

Living during the time of Robert the Bruce and William Wallace, with whom he was associated, Thomas is thought to have been a nationalist agent. This political role of the magus is found frequently throughout history. During Edward the First's bloody ravaging of Scotland, Thomas seems to have been an active traveller and seer in the nationalist cause.

Two traditions of his death are extant. The first is that he was murdered for political reasons by the followers of the Earl of March, and that he foresaw this death accurately. The second is that he lives on in the hollow Eildon hills of his home region in the Lowlands. Like Merlin, or Arthur, Thomas wears the mantle of the national hero who is also attuned to a deep and powerful myth; politics and magic are woven together in his cloak.

The large estates of Ercledoune were donated to the Church by Thomas's son, also called Thomas, thus fulfilling one prediction. The magical hawthorn tree of Thomas's initiation lived on until 1814, when it was blown down in a gale. The local people of Earlston on the River Leader, about thirty-five miles from Edinburgh, naturally attempted its revival by pouring whisky upon the roots, but to no avail. Thomas had prophesied that 'As long as the Thorn Tree stands, / Ercledoune shall keep its lands.' In that same year, six hundred years after these words were set down, a chain of financial disasters struck the community, and all common land was sold in payment of debts.

William Shakespeare was not only familiar with *The History of the Kings of Britain*, the magical history set out by Geoffrey of Monmouth, but also with the prophecies of Thomas the Rhymer. In a certain play, which it is traditionally unlucky to name, a clear adaptation of one of Thomas's verses is found. The original reads:

Feddarate Castle sall ne'er be ta'en  
Till Fyvie wood to the seige is gaen.

Although these lines were adapted by Shakespeare to the castle of High Dunsinane, they were not proven true until a later century, when the troops of William of Orange made battering rams out of Fyvie wood, and entered the previously unconquered castle of Fedderate.

Like Merlin, or Nostradamus, or the Brahan Seer, Thomas has left a series of predictions as partial proof of the effectiveness of his initiation. As with many prophecies some are incomprehensible, others have been found accurate, but puerile demands of accuracy or vindication of the Otherworld powers overlook the essential importance of such individuals as Thomas.

They have left us clues, a method, a chart of rarely travelled realms. Do we dare to follow them, to try for ourselves what they have achieved? Or are we content to sit and quibble or merely read about the mighty men of old?

- 1 True Thomas lay o'er yon grassy bank  
And he beheld a lady gay,  
A lady that was both brisk and bold  
Come riding o'er the fernie brae.
- 2 Her skirt was of the grass-green silk,  
Her mantlet of the velvet fine,  
At ilka tett of her horses mane  
Hung fifty silver bells and nine.
- 3 True Thomas he took off his hat,  
And bowed him low down to his knee;  
'All hail thou mighty Queen of Heaven!  
For your peer on earth I ne'er did see!'
- 4 'Oh no, oh no, True Thomas' she says,  
That name does not belong to me;  
I am but the Queen of Fair Elfland,  
That has come for to visit thee.
- 5 'But ye maun go wi' me now Thomas,  
True Thomas ye maun go wi me,  
For ye maun serve me seven years  
Thro weel or wae as may change to be.'
- 6 She turned about her milk white steed,  
And took True Thomas up behind,  
And aye whene'er the bridle rang,  
The steed flew swifter than the wind.
- 7 For forty days and forty nights  
He wade thro red blude to the knee,  
And he saw neither sun nor moon,  
But heard the roaring of the sea.
- 8 O they rade on and further on,  
Until they came to a garden tree;  
'Light down, light down, ye ladie free,  
And I'll pull of that fruit for thee.'

- 9 'O no, O no, True Thomas,' she says  
    'That fruit maun not be touched by thee,  
    For all the plagues that are in hell,  
    Light on the fruit of this countrie.
- 10 'But I have a loaf here in my lap,  
    Likewise a bottle of red wine,  
    And now ere we go further on,  
    We'll rest awhile, and ye may dine.'
- 11 When he had eaten and drunk his fill,  
    She said 'Lay your head upon my knee,  
    And ere we climb yon high high hill,  
    I will show you fairlies three.
- 12 'Ah see ye not that broad broad road  
    Tha lies by the lily leven?  
    O that is the way of wickedness,  
    Tho some call it the road to Heaven.
- 13 'And see ye not that narrow narrow road,  
    All beset with thorns and briers?  
    O that is the way of righteousness,  
    Tho after it but few enquires.
- 14 'And see ye not that bonny bonny road,  
    Which winds about the ferny brae?  
    O that is the road to fair Elfland,  
    Where you and I this night maun gae.
- 15 'But Thomas you must hold your tongue,  
    Whatever you may hear or see,  
    For if one word you should chance to speak,  
    You will never get back to your ain countrie.'
- 16 He has gotten a coat of the green green cloth,  
    Likewise shoes of the velvet sheen,  
    And till seven years were past and gone,  
    True Thomas ne'er on earth was seen.

### **Thomas the Rhymer**

Whereas many of the magical ballads consist of action, or action combined with visionary sequences, the traditional variants of Thomas the Rhymer are constructed from a series



of interrelated visions, which are part of one united vision and initiation sequence. As this is one of the major keys to the UnderWorld Journey, it is worthy of careful examination and explanation, and will repay continued meditation and application. A long and complex Romance text exists, in which many of the specific elements of Garden, Fruit, Otherworld and related symbols are amplified in a conventional manner, but for reasons outlined above (Chapter 1 and 2) we will deal only with variants found in an oral tradition.

The plot moves through seven specific stages:

1. the Vision of the Queen of Elfland;
2. the Journey through the UnderWorld;
3. the Vision of the Tree;
4. the Ritual of Bread and Wine;
5. the Vision of the Three Roads;
6. the Vow of Silence;
7. the Return to the upper earth.

In some variants the order of the stages is different, while others give descriptions of Elfland and connected material; but the sequence given above, taken from the traditional source ballad used as our main example, is the correct magical order of events.

#### *The Vision of the Queen of Elfland* (verses 1-5)

The Seer or Dreamer lies upon a grassy bank, beneath a Hawthorn Tree. Local tradition offered a specific tree as that used by Thomas, and enough has been said regarding trees and tree magic to make his actions clear to the reader. The Hawthorn Tree, growing upon a grassy bank, is the Tree of Initiation or of Commencement. It is the first tree of the three shown in Diagram 1, and is the only one that may have both a physical and metaphysical nature to regular outward-seeking human perception.

This is the Tree which early legends described as being composed of living green leaves and of flames, divided vertically, as in the vision of the knight Peredur. We have already seen that a thorn tree acts as the magical agent of birth in the ballad 'The Cruel Mother', which is linked to the redemptive symbolism of 'The Wife of Usher's Well' and

'The Maid and the Palmer'. The other two trees lie deeper in the UnderWorld, and are only perceived by altered vision and a change of the direction of attention.

We should not, however, expect the three Trees to be rigidly defined and separated, and in some aspects of the tradition they are implicit rather than specifically described. As with most magical symbols, we may detect their presence by function in the absence of direct description or visual imagery.

The Thorn tree is one of the triad of Oak, Ash, and Thorn, the three sacred trees of oral tradition, to which other trees may be added from ancient lore. This triad, however, is of considerable importance in connection to the Three Under-World Trees. Thorn is the Tree at the Gate between the Worlds, with its associations with May ceremonies, ill luck if picked at the wrong time, combined beauty of blossom and pain of thorn. Hawthorn, incidentally, is also a fruit-bearing tree, and at one time the fruit was eaten and preserved. Like the Rose, it carries Blossom, Thorns and Fruit (rosehips), showing in nature the Three Stages of Transformation: Promise, Pain and Fulfilment. In the ballad of Tam Lin, Fair Janet summons Tam from Fairyland by pulling roses and breaking thorns. We may regard the Hawthorn and the Rose as symbolically identical, and may further equate them with the Crown of Thorns of the Crucifixion.

Oak is the Tree of the Guardian, and of the Sacrificed Ones. In traditional magical visions, the Way to the UnderWorld or to the Grail Castle is often marked by a small oaken door with a symbol carved above it. In some versions of the Vision, the Orchard of Paradise, or the Apple Tree Upon the Hill, is surrounded by a ring of Oaks. Those who meet the male Guardian may encounter him at an Oak Tree, while those who are blessed like Thomas of Ercledoune, are Guided by the Queen of Elfland direct to the fruit.

Ash, traditionally used for thrones, spears and sea-going vessels, may be equated with the third UnderWorld Tree, that of Mediation.

The entire subject of detailed tree symbolism represents a very wide and complex field, which is not directly relevant to the present study, but the serious student or enquirer should consider native Tree Lore in depth.

A detailed study of ancient or oral tree lore is not a prerequisite of operational magic, and once again we should stress that basic initiatory patterns from common consciousness are far more important than scholarly or poetical attributions of woodland.

Thomas of Erledoune, meanwhile, sleeps under the Hawthorn Tree. He beholds a 'lady gay' riding towards him. She is dressed in Green, riding upon a Horse, and her Bridle is hung with Silver Bells. She is a nature power, the Isis of the ancients. Thomas erroneously titles her as 'mighty Queen of Heaven', and she immediately corrects him.

This apparently trivial detail of flattery is a very significant magical clue, which reveals important laws and powers of operation. Firstly, the human magician or initiate, whether male or female, is apt to confuse innerworld powers readily. Most modern occultists are so shocked at actually contacting any Being whatsoever, that they invariably confuse the communication out of sheer surprise at their own partial success. The ballad teaches us two important rules or laws: (1) Do not confuse the Powers one with another; (2) The Powers themselves will tell you who or what they are.

In the case of rule (1) a Power or Being will only react properly if properly addressed, if you know the Name, and an incorrect understanding of an Innerworld Being leads to flawed responses and energies *within the Initiate*. There is no question of Beings 'compelled' to be 'beneficial' by use of their names; this is juvenile and ignorant drivel. The Beings are true to their own nature, but our understanding and channelling of that nature operates utterly through our own consciousness and physical bodies.

If we apply a Power wrongly (call it by the wrong name, worship it as God, use it for foolish ends), then a self-perpetuating distortion occurs within our own matrix of body/consciousness. The Queen that approaches Thomas is the Queen of Elfland, and she specifically tells him that she is not the Queen of Heaven.

She is, in fact, an UnderWorld or under-earth power, who manifests in upper-nature as growth, shown by her green skirt; sexual power of the body, shown by the horse; and the act of summoning or banishing, shown by the silver bells. These bells, which we may equate with the ancient

sistrum of the Mysteries, feature frequently in traditional lore, and are associated with motion, the wind, speed and arousal.

Rule (2) is initially common sense, for Otherworld beings are self-declared by their symbolic appearance. A tradition, however, will also give specific clues and rules, via the instructional tales, songs and dramas preserved in common consciousness. It is vitally important to avoid the pitfalls represented by the models of psychology and 'unified' symbology, wherein all aspects of dream or vision are stuffed into intellectually contrived moulds for preservation and future labelling. All symbolism is *not* related to each and every part of the psyche and the universe, and both the psychological-materialist model and the religious-unity model that are rife in our modern culture are capable of great damage through their vapid lack of direction.

It is correct to state that the various symbolic entities merge one into the other, but this occurs only through transformation within the apprehending consciousness. In other words, we have to change before the links between the various Keys and Gates become active. In magical work, each Innerworld Being should be dealt with according to its own true appearance and nature, and the powers of one realm or World should not be forced through the matrices of another. As we shall soon discover, the Queen of Elfland may become the Queen of Heaven, but She is not so to our limited perceptions.

Thomas is obliged to go with the Queen — he has summoned her up from Below, and has learnt her true name and nature. In some versions of the story, they embrace beneath the Tree. The seer has aroused the inner power, and it carries him away. That this power is explicitly linked with sexual arousal is no mere coincidence, but an applied use of the inner life energies for specific ends.

Thomas is bound to the Queen for seven years (a period that appears in the ballads frequently in connection with vows, and applies to the old custom of 'trial' marriages derived from pre-Christian cultural patterns based upon inner or magical laws). We find this pattern repeated in the ballad of Lord Bateman, which represents a similar pattern of operation.

Thomas mounts upon the milk white steed, and they ride off together, 'and aye whene'er the bridle rang/The steed flew swifter than the wind.'

This concludes the first stage of the visionary sequence, and leads into:

*The Journey through the UnderWorld (verses 6-8)*

The magical steed is directed into the UnderWorld, where neither Sun nor Moon are seen. The aroused power is directed downwards, and the imaginative ability of the seer or initiate perceives (a) a river of blood, and (b) a roaring sea. He is not, remember, wandering loosely in this potent realm, but is under the guidance of the Queen of Elfland, with whom he has exchanged vows.

We shall find the river of blood and the roaring sea again in another context, but they represent the individual's own bloodstream and flow of consciousness, perceived and experienced for the first time as identical with the greater blood and waters of created nature.

This experience or mode lasts forty days and nights for Thomas, and they emerge on the other side and ride further, until they come to 'a garden tree'. Any reasonably competent meditator will be able to confirm the *sound* of the roaring sea for his or herself, as this is a definite and commonly experienced inner sound that arises during certain stages of meditation. Deeper aspects of the sea and the blood are reached through the UnderWorld Journey, and are not usually accessible by regular or popularized meditational methods.

*The Vision of the Tree (verses 8-9)*

Thomas and the Queen of Elfland now arrive at the Second Tree. They have passed beneath, waded the river of blood, heard the roaring of the sea, and then have ridden *further on* to the Apple or Fruit Tree that stands in the centre of the UnderWorld. This is the tree marked (2) in Diagram 1. It is the Tree of Transformation, as Thomas is soon to discover.

The Fruit is usually the Apple, or in some versions it is a Tree of mixed fruits, as in the ancient Irish legends. We now come to the true order of the giving and taking of fruits, which is well known to be corrupted in the orthodox

Christian variants of the Garden myth.

Thomas sees the Fruit in its pure or unadapted state, as it grows at the heart of the UnderWorld. He is comprehending the energies and the powers that hold creation together, and has travelled directly to this stage upon the magical horse, guided by his partner the Queen of Elfland. As he has not met the Guardian, or been imprisoned, or exchanged riddles, or done battle, we may assume that this visionary sequence is the guiding pattern for the individual who has already undergone these processes.

If, for example, Thomas were to pluck the Fruit and try to eat it, the Guardian would be summoned. But he understands the true nature of his Adventure, and offers to pluck the Fruit as a gift to the Queen of Elfland. It is this act of simple sacrifice and direction that enables Thomas to continue his Journey unchallenged, and furthermore, it is his offering of the Fruit that transforms both himself *and the Queen*.

*Ritual of Bread and Wine* (verses 10-11)

She advises him not to touch the Fruit, for it holds all the plagues of Hell. In its raw state, the Fruit is Poison. This advice is similar or parallel to an earlier admonition (omitted in our present text) that the river of blood is made of all the blood shed in the human world.

The Queen has a loaf of bread and a bottle of red wine, however, which she offers to Thomas. This is her response, her return of offered gifts, and they are the Fruit Transformed. In the Christian mass, as in the pagan, the Bread is the Body, and Wine the Blood. Both are Transformed from the primal Fruit.

If Thomas had eaten of the raw fruit, he would have been poisoned, and it is for this reason that the Guardian is placed at the approach to the Tree. Once past the Guardian, the Fruit has to be offered to the Queen, who now may transform the Fruit into Bread and Wine, and herself into a deeper manifestation of Divine power.

It is incorrect to assume that this symbolic sequence shows a crude 'Christianizing' of a pagan Paradise myth. The sequence is exact and precise, and the difference between

the pagan and Christian aspects of the Mystery are intimately linked to the Harrowing of Hell by Christ, which enables the human initiate to pass to and fro in His Name.

Once Thomas has partaken of the Transformed Fruit, given to him by the Queen, he has actually *replaced* the Fruit upon the Tree — by consuming it, by absorbing it into his own entity. This is such a significant action, that it demands further attention.

Thomas may not pluck the fruit, for it absorbs all the plagues of Hell, or all the sorrows of Man and Woman (in some versions). He offers to pluck it for the Queen of Elfland, and she responds by offering him Bread and Wine. If we filled out this section of the vision in detail, we might see that (a) Thomas does not actually pluck the Fruit; he is willing to make that sacrifice without any conditions, but he is not required to do so. The implication is that this magical action is a lesser part, on the behalf of any individual, of some greater or spiritual sacrifice.

Thomas may reach the Tree of Transformation, but when he does so, the Poisoned Fruit is a deeper aspect of his own Aroused Fire, the power that has brought him through the UnderWorld. He sees it as part of and in union with the normally modified powers of creation that are expressed in *form* in the outer or upper world. He is now confronted with *force*, the powers behind the form, and must therefore attune or offer these to their correct place and mode of operation. This is the Queen of Elfland.

We could say that at this stage (b) the Fruit disappears from the Tree, as a result of his offer of selflessness. It appears in the lap of the Queen, as bread and red wine, which she offers to him, with the suggestion that he may rest at this stage of the journey. The greater Journey has not finished yet, but the Traveller may rest and partake of the elements of the ritual of Transformation beneath the Tree.

When Thomas eats and drinks, he *re-transforms* the elements by their absorption within his entity. This is stage (c) of the central process, for at this stage, the Fruit reappears upon the Tree. Thomas has effectively changed the Fruit, for it *reappears in a different place upon the Tree*.

The entire sequence is one of polarity and catalysation, and must be considered carefully and meditatively to reveal its fullest insights.

*The Vision of the Three Roads (verses 11-14)*

Once Thomas has taken the elements of Bread and Wine, he rests with his head upon the knee or lap of the Queen of Elfland. He is joined to her in trust, and this parallels the sexual implication of their vows and embraces in earlier verses and variants, although by this stage the concept of physical gratification has been transformed into an exchange of gifts and a shared journey and vision.

She shows him 'fairlies three', a vision within a vision, and the last stage of the Journey. He would not be able to perceive this stage, let alone undertake to travel upon it, if he had not undergone the rituals of transformation at the second Tree.

Once again, we should emphasize that the vision of the three roads is ancient and potent, and is not to be regarded as a mere orthodox gloss upon a pagan original. Even at this last stage of the Journey, the initiate is offered a choice of how he or she may use the transformed power. The three choices are:

1. The Broad Road of wickedness that some say leads to Heaven;
2. the Narrow Road of righteousness, beset with thorns and briars;
3. the Bonny or Middle Road, to Elfland.

The first road is that of power expressed within the outer world, that of dominion, and the illusion of worldly hierarchies that impose order in the name of Heaven. It represents not only the individual propensity for simple 'wickedness' but more esoterically the law that causes materially expressed hierarchies of spiritual or magical power to degenerate and become corrupt.

The adept is able to walk this road, either for personal ends or for time-bound hierarchical schemes of order and mass control. In either case they may seem to be the road to Heaven, but terminate in evil.

The Second Road is that of individual sacrifice for specific aims. It represents the magical sacrifices of the ancient Sacred Kings, and the Sacrifice of Christ, which was a similar act upon a greater scale with far-reaching implications that are



still developing in outer serial time. It may indeed be 'personal righteousness', but there is no moral issue at stake, for it is the ancient sacrificial way of containment and restriction of life-power for specific ends.

This road also is available to the adept, but the implications of the Harrowing of Hell are that the Third Road is now open to any that are able to perceive it.

The Third Road, 'to fair Elfland', is the middle of the three roads. In the detailed vision, it may lead to the Secret Castle that houses the Grail, or to a low hill on which the Third Tree grows. This is the Tree of Mediation, the transmuted Grail, the power of the UnderWorld transformed through human consciousness to encompass all Worlds. It is to this place, upon the Third Road, that Thomas and the Fairy Queen 'this night maun gae'.

### *The Vow of Silence (verse 15)*

Thomas is advised not to speak while in Fairyland, no matter what wonders are shown to him. This motif occurs in the Grail legends also, where it is tied to the asking of significant questions, a process usually associated with the confrontation of the Guardian. In a deeper understanding of this admonition at the final stage of the Journey, we may find some significant magical laws.

If Thomas speaks a word, he will not get back to his own country. This popular concept, which includes not only asking questions but eating of Otherworld food, and consorting with Otherworld Lovers, both of which Thomas has already done, masks a magical law. As we are regarding the Journey as a visionary and powerful transforming sequence, we now encounter the last choice upon the Way.

Thomas may speak and question the wonders that he perceives, but by doing so, he commits himself forever to the Otherworld. He becomes, in modern terminology, an Inner Plane adept. He chooses to explore and grow within the inner realms, and not to return to the outer world. This is one of the choices offered to the initiate after physical death, and as we are considering the most recondite levels of the Mystery, we should consider this warning from the Queen of Elfland in such a light. Should Thomas direct his attentions towards further Mysteries, he will take the Fourth

Road, which is Unseen on the other side of the Hill.

If he does not do so, he is able to return by the Middle Way to the outerworld, where he appears transformed by his experience. The Three Roads may also be considered in the context of post-mortem metaphysics. The discarnate soul usually takes the 'broad broad Way', in company with millions of others, following certain natural laws of attraction which are attuned by specific religions and mysteries, national group-souls, deep long-term aims of potent groups and patterns. These in turn are loosely related to certain stellar influences, and to the overall luminous attraction of Lucifer within the earth's planetary body. The Broad Way leads to rebirth.

The Road of Thorns and Briars represents a voluntary incarnation in service of some higher aim or order — one who need not return to the planet or group worlds by impulse or attraction, but who chooses to do so out of love for those who suffer.

The Middle Way does not lead to incarnation from the Inner to Outer worlds, under normal circumstances. It may be specifically opened for communication and exchange 'across time', as we have seen in the Summoning of the Ancestors, and this is the simplest human level of its so-called discarnate operation. If the reader has followed the theory of the UnderWorld Initiation carefully, it will be clear that the usual concepts of life/death are irrelevant in such a context.

In a second level or mode, the Middle Way is available for exchange of energies between beings in different worlds. Spiritual enlightenment flows along this way, as do many of the concerted group rituals that involve beings of more than one realm or world operating together.

The third and most significant level of the Middle Way is the approach of the Saviour or Messiah. It is along this Way that a Divine One is born into the outer world, hence the conceptual structure of the Virgin Birth. This process, however, is merely a human reflection by Divine Power, of the Descent into Hell, which is also a death/birth on the part of the Son of Light. The Descent into Hell is synonymous and simultaneous with the Conception, Birth, Sacrifice, Death and Resurrection. They only appear to be separated

to the awareness locked into the illusion of serial time.

*The Return to Upper Earth* (verse 16)

These are the choices, then, that Thomas has taken. He has emulated Christ in his descent into Hell, but has no personal motive therein. He chooses not to pass on to the Unknown, but to return to the human group-world, where he acts as a prophet and as an example to all who may follow.

He is clothed in Green, which signifies his union with The Land, a union that occurred as a direct result of his transformation within the UnderWorld. His prophetic ability arises as a result of his mediating power, and not through the communication of 'familiar spirits'. He is able to perceive the apparent future, because it has already happened in the UnderWorld.

The importance of Thomas, and of other historical persons who undertook the Journey is not merely poetical or inspirational. They still exist, they may still be contacted, and they are present in the inner worlds as teachers and guides.

## LORD BATEMAN

- 1 Young Beichan he was a noble lord,  
A noble lord of high degree;  
He's gather'd all his silks and rubies,  
The Turkish land to go and see.
- 2 He first sailed East and then he sailed West  
Until he came to the Turkish shore,  
And he was caught all in strong prison  
Never to be released no more.
- 3 Beside the prison there grew a tree  
It grew so mightly stout and long  
He was tied all about his middle  
Until his life was almost gone.
- 4 O the gaoler he had one only daughter  
The fairest one that ever you'd see,  
She stole the keys to her father's dwelling  
And vowed young Beichan she'd set free.
- 5 She took him down to the lowermost cellar  
She drew him a drink of the strongest wine  
And every moment seemed an hour,  
'O young Beichan if you were mine.'

- 6 'Let's make a vow and let's make a promise,  
Let's make a vow and make it stand;  
You vow you'll marry with no mortal woman,  
And I'll vow to marry with no mortal man.'
- 7 They made this vow, they made this promise,  
They made this vow and made it stand:  
He vowed he'd marry with no other woman  
Until she'd married some other man.
- 8 And seven long years had rolled around,  
It seemed as if it was ninety-nine  
She dressed up in her finest gold clothing  
And vowed young Beichan she'd go find.
- 9 She went down to the broad waterside,  
She set foot in a ship of fame  
With a mast of gold and the sails of silk  
To carry her far across the main.
- 10 And when she came to his castle gate  
She knocked so loud upon the ring,  
'Who's there? Who's there?' cried the proud young  
porter,  
'Who knocks so loud but cannot get in?'
- 11 'Is this young Beichan's castle?' she cried  
'Or is the lord himself within?'  
'O yes, O yes,' cries the proud young porter,  
He's this very day brought his new bride home!'
- 12 'Go remember to him a piece of bread,  
Go remember to him a glass of wine,  
Go remember to him the fair Turkish lady  
Who freed him from the cold iron chains.'
- 13 Away and away goes this proud young porter,  
As fast as lightning away goes he,  
Until he came to young Beichan's chamber  
And he went down on his bended knee.
- 14 'It's seven years I have served thee  
Seven long years and another three,  
And the fairest lady now stands at your gate  
That my own two eyes did ever see.

- 15 'She has a gold ring on every finger  
And on her middle one she has three,  
And she has more gold all around her middle  
Than would buy yourself and your castle free.
- 16 'She begs you send her one cut of your bread,  
She begs you send her one glass of wine,  
She begs you remember the fairest lady  
Who freed you from the cold iron chains.'
- 17 He stamped his foot upon the floor  
He broke the table in pieces three  
Says I'll forsake both land and wedding  
For the fair Sophia that set me free.
- 18 O up and spake the new bride's mother  
Was never heard to speak so free,  
Saying 'What will become of my only daughter  
Since young Sophia has crossed the sea?'
- 19 'If I wedded your only daughter,  
I swear that's she's none the worse of me,  
For she came to me on a horse and a saddle  
And will ride home in a coach and three.'
- 20 Sophia she came to the castle gate  
Add knocked so loud that they let her in  
She's got more gold on her little finger  
Than the new bride and all her kin.

### Lord Bateman

This traditional ballad was extremely popular, and has been collected from living oral currency well into the first half of the twentieth century. It is an excellent example of a clear sequence of symbolism derived from the hidden tradition, and directly incorporated into the popular imagination. In addition to being a first-rate romantic plot, the sequence may be seen as a magical and spiritual model. Before dealing with specific verses, it may be useful to restate the basic plot in magical terminology, supported by folklore and tradition.

A noble lord sets sail for 'Turkey'. He sails both east and west, until he is taken prisoner, and chained to a huge tree outside a prison. The gaoler or king has a lovely daughter,

who sets the prisoner free, first taking him down to the lowermost cellar to partake of bread and wine. They vow to keep faith with one another, and he leaves her. When seven years have passed, she sets sail in a marvellous ship, which goes directly to his castle, and she arrives just as he is about to marry another woman. The porter will not admit her at first, but the vows of bread and wine are so binding, and her golden attire so striking, that he informs his master of her arrival. Lord Bateman (Young Beichan in our present version) smashes his wedding table, and disowns his new bride, sending her back home with far greater wealth than she ever brought with her.

*Verse 1*

In oral lore both 'Turkey' and 'Spain' are used as euphemisms for Hell or the Otherworld, and this standard application should not be underestimated, for it stems not only from the ancient Celtic concept of the Otherworld over the Water, but from the historical period of the Crusades. While a great deal is made of the cultural exchanges wrought during the Crusades, which are the setting (albeit vague) of our ballad, few commentators have grasped one of the vital magical aspects of this period. By seeking to free Jerusalem from the 'infidel', the Christian nobles, peasants, soldiers and children who crusaded were enwrapped in a series of mass manifestations of an ancient theme: the Otherworld raid.

No matter what political or economic ramifications are applied in retrospect, the crusading spirit was fervently mystical, and for the thousands of common folk who participated was a direct reflection and manifestation of widespread oral tradition: the Harrowing of Hell, the raid on the Otherworld, the liberation of the spirit from the clutches of the devil, the pursuit of the birthplace or holy place of the Son of God. Nor did the final Crusade bring an end to the hunt for the promised land, the journey *in the flesh* to holy ground, but it did mark the conclusion of the symbolic journey fermenting through into mass group action.

In the context of our ballad, an ancient theme has been placed into pseudo-historical context — but the very context that reinforces the mythical aspects of the story. It need

hardly be added that the Young Beichan's sailing East and West is typical of the passage to the Otherworld, the hunt for the magical land.

### *Verse 2*

As we might expect, our hero is captured in the Otherworld, and imprisoned, like many a Celtic hero or Arthurian knight. Once again we find the potent image of the Man chained to the Tree. He is entrapped by the King of the Turks — the King of the UnderWorld, who is also the Gaoler, or as we have seen earlier, the Guardian. In one variant of the ballad:

They bored a hole in his left shoulder  
And in the hole they planted a tree  
They had him chained all by the middle  
Until of life he was quite weary.

This verse is slightly reminiscent of the 'Leaves of Light', and folklorists acknowledge that it corresponds to certain pagan ceremonies which pre-date the presumed period of the Christian Crucifixion.

### *Verses 4-5*

The Gaoler's fair daughter steals her father's keys, and liberates the prisoner. As in Tam Lin, true love alone can surpass the UnderWorld powers of enchantment, and 'Young Sophia' is not only the lover, but also the Goddess or Fairy Queen. She takes Beichan 'to the lowermost cellar' where they partake of bread and wine, as occurs in 'Thomas the Rhymer'.

### *Verses 6-7*

During the partaking of bread and wine, that potent variant of the ritual adapted to Christian use through the action of Jesus at the Last Supper, the hero and the maiden exchange vows.

In this ballad, the vows are clearly specified, and we may infer that they are the same type of magical vow that binds the characters in the 'The Demon Lover' and as are implied in 'Thomas the Rhymer'. It should be realized that like most



ballads, 'Lord Batemen' works on three levels or planes of concept and energy: *the emotional, the magical, and the spiritual*.

In normal magical or metaphysical symbolic expositions, these three levels or harmonics are set upon the Tree of Life in ascending order, with emotional/intellectual content (words, plot and music) leading into the magical awareness (meaning of symbols, process of energies of operation, and arousal of inner imagery, keyed content) culminating in the spiritual consciousness (understanding, wisdom, Being). We find this pattern repeated, or rather, reflected, in the ancient hidden tradition of the ballad lore, but the levels are sought by passing Beneath or Within, rather than Above.

*Level 1.* Words/patterning of plot/music occur in the regular outer or group world, the Kingdom of the Qabalistic Tree of Life, and the consensual matrix of body and awareness which receives and transmits the units of consciousness manifesting through the song itself.

*Level 2.* Magical Awareness is sought by entering the Gate to the UnderWorld, where the Guardian poses His Questions. It is these Questions and their Answers which involve the meaning of the symbols in the key song or story used as a vehicle for the Journey, and encounters that occur *en route* are the energies of transformation, which manifest in the magical awareness as images and attuned patterns or key symbols.

*Level 3.* As a result of this catalysing process, the individual reaches the understanding and wisdom which underpin all created worlds, and becomes a fully aware being.

We may see these stages in the ballad of Lord Bateman as follows:

*Level 1.* The hero assembles his riches on ship (his consciousness within his body) and determines to set out on his quest.

*Level 2.* He travels by a magical route (both East and West) until he reaches the Otherworld, where he is imprisoned by the King of that Realm. He is chained to a Tree at the portal to the UnderWorld Castle (growing outside the prison) and he suffers until he is near to death. (His assumed personality is disintegrated by the ferment and transforming power of the catabolic process.)

It is at this point that the female power manifests to benefit the hero, who unlike Thomas or Tam Lin, has not yet met with Her in any aspect. As a result of his quest, his capture, and his suffering, the daughter of the King or Gaoler takes pity upon the hero, and stealing her father's keys, sets Lord Bateman free.

She does not, however, liberate him immediately, or run away with him, as we might expect in any logical romantic plot. It is her love that leads him to:

*Level 3. The Lowermost Cellar, where he partakes of Bread and Wine. As Thomas feasted with the Queen of Elfland, so does Bateman with the Gaoler's Daughter. To partake of the UnderWorld food is to be bound to the laws of that world, a magical theme which runs through all 'sharing' rituals in whatever form they may manifest.*

In the Lowermost Cellar, Bateman vows to Sophia that he will be true to her, and she in turn vows that she will be true to him. The hero has become an initiate, and is bound by certain magical laws for a set period of outward or rotational time.

### *Verses 8-9*

Bateman disappears from the ballad at this point, for he has returned to the human world after the Daughter has set him free by use of the Stolen Keys. He is not, however, fully transformed, for he has been liberated by an agency of Grace (as was Tam O' Lin), and not through his own actions in the UnderWorld (as was Thomas the Rhymer). This is an important distinction, and one of several alternative magical and spiritual patterns offered in the oral tradition.

We may, perhaps, infer that all the relevant ballads are fragments of a coherent body of lore, or (as in the opinion of the author) that they are rotating or cyclical fragments that manifest in the group consciousness from the depths of the unknown, reflecting that which occurs Below for those who choose to seek the Path to Fairyland.

To limit the tradition by suggesting that all expositions of the Otherworld and of magic are inevitably corrupt variants of some sterile and rigid original model is to miss the value of the oral lore altogether. Whatever the earlier forms may or may not have been, the corpus which we are

**Diagram 6. 'Lord Bateman' or Sophia at the Castle Gate.****Spheres**

- 6: The Knight = Central Spirit = Higher consciousness.
- 7: Emotional Sphere.
- 8: Intellectual Sphere.
- 9: Foundation (The Magical Wedding Vows).
- 10: The Body/Castle Gate. Sophia waits at the Gate.

**Paths**

UnderWorld/Sphere 10: Sophia Approaches.

8/10: The Porter challenges Sophia (Intellect, Mercury)  
Tarot Key: FOOL.

8/6: The Porter goes to the Knight's Chamber.  
(Intelligence turns to Spiritual centre)  
Tarot Keys: THE CHARIOT.

6/7: Knight declares his Love for Sophia.  
(Spirit animates emotions)  
Tarot Key: THE LOVERS.

7/10: The New Bride taken in default of Vows.  
(Emotions generate sexual union leading to incarnation)  
Tarot Key: THE WORLD/UNIVERSE.

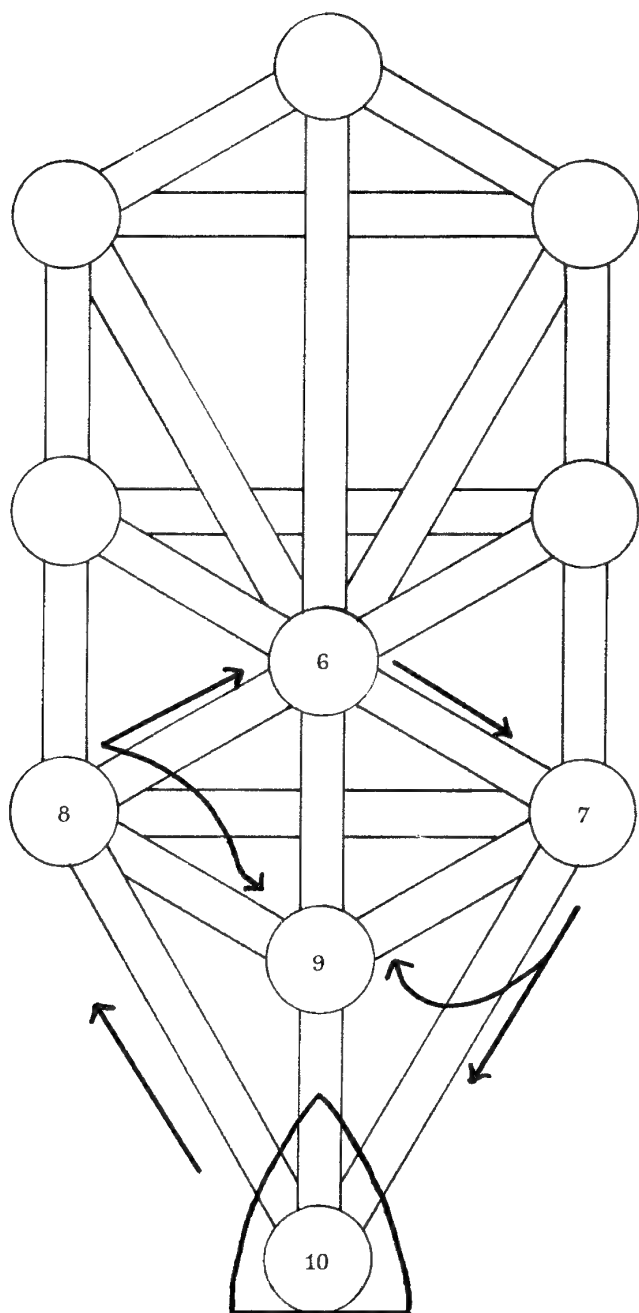
10/9: Sophia claims her Vow.  
(Magical Power arising from body through Lunar generative Foundation)  
Tarot Key: THE MOON.

9/6: Sophia merges in spiritual Wedding with Knight.  
(Arousal of Inner Fire)  
Tarot Key: THE SUN.

9/8: The Porter swears by the beauty of Sophia.  
(Intellect attuned to Foundational Power)  
Tarot Key: THE MAGUS.

9/7: The New Bride is Sent Home.  
(generative power realigned for magical and spiritual purposes)  
Tarot Key: THE PRIESTESS.

8/7: The Wedding Table OR The Spinning Sword.  
(The rotation between Hermes/Venus that governs human life and activities)  
Tarot Key: THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE.



analysing at present offers several *alternative* modes and varying degrees of realization of the UnderWorld Journey.

In the case of Bateman or Beichan, his alternative series of possible actions and manifestations is clearly stated. From the basic romantic plot, we find that he (quite irrationally) leaves his fair saviour, and returns home. She faithfully waits for the period of seven years, and then goes after him, only to find that he is about to marry someone else.

While this may be a superficially satisfying contrivance for a simple love and adventure story, it loosely disguises the more potent elements of the plot.

The hero is tied by his acceptance of Otherworld food and drink, particularly the ritual of Bread and Wine. He has exchanged vows with Sophia, the secret saving power of love, who has liberated him and carried him down to the lowermost levels of the UnderWorld Castle or realm.

Having been liberated from his iron chains, he returns to the outer world, and serves out a period of his vow, but we may see his choice of marriage (in despite of his full vow) as a return to the human world or regular consciousness; a return which, as he discovers, he cannot make.

### *Verse 9*

It is clear from the ballad, that Sophia will wait for ever in the Castle, until magically summoned to Bateman's own land by his breaking of the vows.

To reach her lover, Sophia travels in a magical ship of wonderful appearance, clearly the same type of ship as is used by 'The Demon Lover', to claim upon his former vows, in a disastrous or unjustified branch of the theme. This vessel, as with the mysterious ships that feature so strongly in the Celtic and later Arthurian legends, travels directly to her goal: the castle of her lover.

### *Verses 10-20*

At this point, the plot reaches its median line, and the remaining ten verses of the twenty are a mirror of the first ten, in a transformed mode. To grasp this fully, we should recapitulate: the Hero seeks the Otherworld; he is imprisoned, and enchained upon the Tree of Transformation by the Guardian; he is liberated by the Daughter using the

Stolen Keys; she takes him into the Depths and exchanges vows in a mass ritual; He returns to his homeland, leaving her behind in the Otherworld.

The balancing half of the plot is as follows: She is aware that he is about to break his vow; she travels in a wondrous ship from the Otherworld to his Castle; she knocks, but the Porter will not let her enter; nevertheless he runs to his master, who suddenly recalls his vows; the new bride (neither better nor worse for wear) returns to her own place enriched; Sophia enters the Castle as Bride.

Whereas the first ten verses show the Quest and the actions in the UnderWorld, the balancing ten show how the Divine Power manifests in the human body. She travels by magical means, she knocks upon the Gate (of his consciousness) and is met by the Porter, the questioning intellect that guards the Gate, the Mercury of the individual awareness. This path of development is indicated by the lower five spheres of the Tree of Life (Diagram 6).

The Porter cannot hold out against her beauty, her potent power in the form of the Vows, and carries the message to the Lord of the Castle. He is so energized and moved by the message requesting Bread and Wine, that he breaks the Table (or in some versions his Sword) into three pieces, thus liberating himself from whatever form has bound him to his inferior marriage.

This sequence shows the individual during a lifetime, in which the sexual or generative power is normally flowing in a consensual or reproductive mode (the new bride; the forgetting of vows; the marriage table or the military sword). The arrival of a deeper aspect of this same power, Sophia at the Castle Gate, not only causes the functions of Castle, Porter and Knight to be at-one in their direction, but breaks the Marriage Table (a process similar to the Overturning of the Tables in the Temple by Jesus). The 'new bride', the generative or creative power, is not cast out (as in erroneous or perverted use of so-called purity) but enriched, and sent home in a powerful new horse-drawn carriage.

Sophia now cannot be denied at the Gate, and she enters in her full Glory, Victory and Beauty. The Journey to the UnderWorld has been fulfilled, the Divine Power has arisen,

and claimed its rightful place as Bride and Liberator of the Individual. At this stage, Sophia is clearly the Goddess.

## THE DEMON LOVER

*(Also known as 'The House Carpenter')*

- 1 'Well met and well met my own true love,  
Well met and well met,' cried he,  
'I've come for to claim on my former vows  
That you once gave unto me!'
- 2 'O away and away with all former vows,  
Such vows ah they do breed strife,  
And at the end of seven long years,  
I am another man's wife!'
- 3 'O but I could have married a King's royal daughter,  
She would have married with me,  
But I forsook three crowns of gold,  
And it's all for the loving of thee.'
- 4 'Well if you could have married a Kings's royal  
daughter  
I'm sure that I'm not to blame,  
For I have married a house carpenter,  
And I think he's a fine young man!'
- 5 'O forsake O forsake your house carpenter,  
And come all along with me,  
I'll take you to where the white lilies grow,  
All at the bottom of the sea.'



- 6 'If I do forsake my house carpenter,  
And come along with thee,  
What have you got to maintain me upon,  
And keep me from slavery?'
- 7 'It's I have seven ships all upon the salt sea  
And seven more on the dry land,  
And one hundred and ten of the brave sailor  
men,  
With music at your command.'
- 8 Her old love he had a ship all of gold,  
And on board of that ship she has gone,  
And she was dressed in scarlet and red,  
And comely for to look on.
- 9 They had not been at sea one week  
One week and one week but barely three,  
When this fair maiden she began for to weep,  
And she wept right bitterly.
- 10 'O are you weeping for houses and land,  
Or gold and silver in store?  
Or do you weep for your house carpenter  
That never you'll see no more?
- 11 'O I am not weeping for houses and land  
Or gold and silver in store,  
But I do weep for my little son,  
That never I'll see no more.'
- 12 They sailed on and further on  
And tall and tall grew he,  
Until at length that shining ship,  
No taller was than he.
- 13 He struck off the topmast with his hand  
And the mainmast with his knee,  
He broke that shining ship in twain  
And dashed it to the bottom of the sea.
- 14 'What hills, O what hills are these my love  
These hills that do rise so high?  
'O these are the hills of Heaven my love,  
And these hills we must pass by.'

- 15 'And what hills, O what hills are these my love,  
All dreary with frost and snow?'  
'O these are the hills of Hell, my love,  
And together there you and I must go.'

## THE WIFE OF USHERS WELL

- 1 There was a lady at Usher's Well,  
And children she had three,  
She sent them off to the foreign school,  
To learn their grammeree.
- 2 O they hadn't been gone but a very short time,  
About three weeks and a day,  
When death sweet death came hastening along,  
And stole those babes away.
- 3 'There is a King in Heaven' she cried,  
'A King of the Third Degree  
Who will send back my own three sons,  
This night send them back to me.'
- 4 She prayed the winds would never cease,  
Nor the waters fall from flood,  
Til her three sons came home to her,  
In their own flesh and blood.
- 5 It was round and about the Martinmass time,  
When the nights were long and mirk  
This Wife's three sons came to her hall door,  
And their hats were made of birk.

- 6 It neither grew in dyke nor ditch,  
Nor yet by any wall,  
O but at the gates o' Paradise,  
This birk grew fair withal.
- 7 She's made them a bed in a backwards room,  
And on it put a neat white sheet,  
And over the top put a golden spread,  
The better they might sleep.
- 8 'Take it off, take it off, dear Mother,' cried one,  
'Take it off I say again.  
We will not be here by the break o day,  
For our Saviour will call us away.'
- 9 So she's laid a table with bread and wine,  
As neat as neat can be,  
'Come eat, come drink, my three little babes,  
Come eat, come drink with me.'
- 10 'We cannot eat your bread Mother,  
Neither can we drink your wine,  
For our Saviour dear is standing near,  
And to Him we must resign.
- 11 'Cold clay cold clay hangs over our heads,  
Green grass grows at our feet,  
And every tear that you do shed,  
Doth wet our winding sheet.'

### **The Wife of Usher's Well**

The core of the native tradition is Necromancy. Geoffrey of Monmouth tells us as much directly, in his description of the Sun-King Bladud (*History of the Kings of Britain*) who spread the study and practice of Necromancy throughout the land, founded our most ancient university, and kept an eternal flame burning in worship of the Goddess Minerva (Brigit) at the Temple of Aquae Sulis, where copious hot springs still arise from a hidden source within the earth.

Wells and springs were the obvious gateways to the UnderWorld, and were especially sacred to our Ancestors. The rising and falling of magical water sources plays a prominent role in ancient lore, and even in the present day,

holy wells and springs are respected after the old manner, with images, offerings and wishes.

It is the well, spring and cave that lead to the Ancestors, or to the blessed Dead. They, in turn, mediate the Powers of the UnderWorld to the living, both directly as in some of the magical practices outlined in the foregoing pages, and indirectly through our collective and individual inheritance within the body and blood.

As has been suggested, these two modes of mediation are not truly separate, but may be 'two sides of one coin', or more specifically, are only apparently separate in the fragmented and unfocused awareness. The ephemeral time-consumed consensus of the body is a mirror of the imaginative realms of the Inner Worlds, which are energized from the UnderWorld. Students of astrology are aware of this reflection process from the shape of the birth chart.

In 'The Wife of Usher's Well' we find specific fragments of the Necromantic tradition, and these should be regarded in the light of the overall hidden lore, and not in isolation.

The superficial level of the story is one of a woman driven by grief to invoke the shades of her lost sons, who, having become respectably Christian, refuse to indulge her necromantic whims. Allowing for the deep and powerful background of Celtic ancestor worship and well worship, we may read a little further into the plot, and summarize it as follows.

### *Verses 1-2*

The female keeper of a well sends three sons 'off to the foreign school, to learn their grammeree'. As we have stated previously, visits to Spain, Turkey, the unco' land, a foreign land, often imply the journey to the Otherworld or UnderWorld.

In this example, the three sons are sent to learn 'Grammeree', sometimes romanticized as the magical arts, or at least to 'learn their letters'. Magicians will understand that these are one and the same type of learning.

The three sons, however, die during their sojourn in the foreign school. We may interpret this in three ways. If we retain our affirmation of the ancient necromantic tradition, we may infer that they have been sacrificed.

Secondly, if the three sons are undertaking the Journey, as with our other heroes Lord Bateman, Tam Lin and Thomas the Rhymer, they come very near to death in the process. Some individuals may actually die if their Guides and Guardian are not properly attuned.

Thirdly there is a deeper aspect of the symbolism, for the three sons represent three aspects of the individuality, three facets of the Well Keeper's consciousness. As the tradition is one of transformation, the old personality literally dies during the quest, and can never return, as it has ceased to exist.

#### *Verses 3-4*

The Wife of Usher's Well is clearly a practitioner of magic, for she invokes a specific power to bring her sons back, 'A King of the Third Degree'. While it is interesting to speculate what this might mean, it is more valuable to discover from the later development of the song (verse 10) that this King is not necessarily one and the same as the Saviour, who appears as a higher power that commands the phantoms of the dead.

Although we have no clear evidence, it might be suggested that the King of the Third Degree in Heaven is the Sun (Earth, Moon, Sun), and is therefore, like the traditional King Bladud, a pagan god-hero. This suggestion is reinforced by the Wife's prayer in verse 4, where she utters a typical pagan and Druidic incantation, praying that 'the winds would never cease, Nor the waters fall from flood'. She invokes the elements in Nature, and is a reflection of the Goddess stirring primal wind and water over the Earth in grief for her lost son or lover.

The purpose of her invocation is to bring her sons back 'in their own flesh and blood', a recurring theme in balladry, where the dead arise bodily. We have discussed many of the implications of this belief in previous pages.

#### *Verses 5-6*

The Wife's invocation is not as arbitrary as we may think. Firstly she calls upon the power of a King of the Third Degree, and secondly she prays that winds and flood will not cease until her sons return in the body. She is using the elemental

powers to stir the Earth, under which live the Dead. As a result of this action, the Earth gives them up, as in other ballads where excessive grief burns the dead as tears fall upon them to their discomfort, and they rise up to challenge the weeper upon their grave.

The three sons return at Martinmass, the Night of the Year, but they only come as far as the Hall door. They wear hats of bark or of birch, the Tree that guards the gate of Paradise. They are visitors from the Otherworld, and are bound to it. The binding of the head with a band, hat or cloth, occurs in other traditional stories and songs, and is often associated with death. In the ballad 'Giles Collins' a mysterious woman curses her lover, and washes a cloth or stone that represents his soul in the river. He becomes ill, and his sister ties a napkin around his head, whereupon he dies.

There are various tales of spells and curses involving a shrinking headband, which probably derive from an ancient belief in tying the head of a victim to the Otherworld by magical ritual. The Celts were headhunters and preserved the trophies of their vanquished enemies in cedar oil, according to classical historians, a fact which has been confirmed by archaeology in the form of ancient temples with locations for skulls; numerous representations of the head in artificial form; and further supported by written and oral tradition.

In this same context, hair is traditionally loosed to make a spell, but bound up or tied up in knots to fix the spell into shape. The monastic tonsure, the cardinal's hat, the bishop's mitre, and many other magical hats or hairstyles may be added to the list, all deriving from ancient usage. Certain revered individuals in the pagan mysteries were not allowed to cut their hair, and although this is often cited as a practice connected to the life-force inherent in the hair itself, it is more likely to be because the Hair was used to tie the Head to the Tree.

The Three Sons wear hats of birch or bark, therefore, and so are no longer mortal or tied to the outer world, but are tied to the Tree of Paradise.

#### *Verses 7-11*

We now enter upon a second ritual. The first, the

Summoning, corresponds to the arousal of the inner energies, the elemental powers, shown in this example as wind and water, gale and flood. The Three Sons appear at the Hall Door, but will not enter. The Wife commences a ritual of entrapment or seduction, which is identical to that used in Lord Bateman or Thomas Rhymer.

Firstly she makes them a bed with a golden spread, 'in a backwards room'. She invites them to sleep in this bed, and they refuse, for if they should fall into that sleep, they would miss the cockcrow, and not hear the call of the Saviour.

Secondly, she invites them to partake of bread and wine, the familiar mass ritual that connects the magical ballads. She is, in fact, working the Keys 'backwards', drawing the dead sons back into manifestation. They refuse her bread and wine, once again calling upon the Saviour, who is 'standing near'.

The ballad concludes with a standard verse about excessive grief disturbing the dead, which may seem like a weak ending after such stirring necromancy, but which refers to the deeper symbolism of the rivers of blood and tears which are encountered in the UnderWorld.

Although the version of the ballad given here does not include specific verses regarding cockcrow (other than reference to the break of day), other texts and related themes in other ballads refer to three degrees of colours of cockerel; white, red, and black. The successive crowing of these birds draws the Dead back to the UnderWorld. A Continental ballad expresses this quite directly:

The white cock is crowing  
And down must I below,  
To earth wend all my fellows  
And with them I must go.

The red cock now is crowing  
And down must I below,  
To earth must wend all dead men  
And I too must go.

The black cock now is crowing  
Down I must go below,



Unlocked are the Portals  
And in must I go.

— translation of 'Aage og Else', Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*

The White, Red and Black cock are the three totem birds of Transmutation, in reverse order. They correspond to alchemical colour symbolism which was derived from ancient oral traditional lore.

The refusal of the dead sons to be tempted to enter, to sleep, and to eat, may be considered as a reversal of the three denials of Christ (Matthew 26:34, or John 13:38), as they are three affirmations of the power of the Saviour who is in the Otherworld. Whereas Peter, the rock upon which the orthodox Church claims to be founded, denied his Master three times before the cock crew and awoke to the realization of his cowardice, the three Sons affirm Christ three times before cock-crow and so return to Paradise or the UnderWorld.

'Simon Peter saith unto him, 'Lord whither goest thou?' Jesus answered, 'Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow afterwards.'

Peter said unto him, 'Lord why cannot I follow thee even now? I will lay down my life for thee.'

Jesus answereth, 'Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow until thou hast denied me thrice.' (John 13:36-38).

The ballad of 'The Wife of Usher's Well' is connected with both 'The Cruel Mother', and another important ballad, 'The Maid and the Palmer'. These represent a further development or branch of the same theme, in which the Mother undergoes her own penance or period of transformation in the Otherworld.

One such transformation is as 'a porter in Hell'. The role of Porter has been discussed in the foregoing pages under several different headings, but is essentially that of Guardian of the Gates. Peter, it may be remembered, is the orthodox porter of the Gates of Heaven.

In some longer variants of 'The Wife of Usher's Well', the three sons lead the Mother down a road to a Green Chapel, wherein Jesus Christ forgives sins. Particularly significant

is the identification made in Continental versions of the 'cruel mother' theme, often set forth in the medieval ballad of 'The Maid and the Palmer'.

In these variants, the transformations, including Porter-ship of Hell, are given as penances by the Palmer. Popular tradition repeatedly asserts that the Palmer is Jesus Christ, while the Maid is none other than Mary Magdalene.

This gives us the interesting mirrored image or parallel of the dark myth woman Mary Magdalene as Porter of Hell, which accords well with the initiatory power of the Queen of Elfland and other UnderWorld Women in tradition.

## THE CRUEL MOTHER

- 1 There was a lady lived in York  
All alone and a lonely  
She was courted by her own father's clerk,  
Down by the Greenwood side.
- 2 She lent her back against a thorn  
All alone and alonely  
And there she had two pretty babes born,  
Down by the Greenwood side.
- 3 She took a penknife long and sharp,  
And stabbed those pretty babes through their  
hearts,
- 4 She dug a grave by the light of the Moon,  
And covered it over with dirt and stones.
- 5 One day as she was going to church  
She spied two pretty babes stood in the porch.
- 6 'O babes O babes if you were mine  
I'd dress you up in satin fine.'
- 7 'O Mother O Mother when we were thine  
You did not treat us half as fine.

- 8 'O babes O babes can you foresee  
What the future holds for me?'
- 9 'It's seven years a fish in the flood  
Seven years a bird in the wood.
- 10 'And seven years the tongue of a bell  
And seven more years a porter in Hell.'
- 11 'O welcome welcome bird in the wood  
And welcome welcome fish in the flood.
- 12 'And welcome welcome tongue of a bell  
But Christ deliver me out of Hell.'

# THE FALSE KNIGHT ON THE ROAD OR RIDDLES WISELY EXPOUNDED

‘O Where are you going?’ said the false Knight on the road,  
‘I’m going to the school,’ said the wee boy and still he stood.

So begins one of the major magical ballads, in which a false knight exchanges riddles or capping phrases with a wee boy. In other variants the boy is replaced by a maid, as in the fifteenth century variant ‘*Inter diabolus et Virgo*’ which we may guess to represent a more accurate form of the tale. In the variants which have a wee boy as the Traveller, he tops each threat that the False Knight makes.

‘I wish you were at sea,’ said the False Knight on the  
Road,  
‘Aye, and a good ship under me,’ said the wee boy and  
still he stood.

‘I think I hear a bell,’ said the False Knight on the Road,  
‘and it’s ringing you to Hell,’ said the wee boy, and still he  
stood.

In this set of ballads, we find the encounter with the

Guardian, and a wisdom contest or question and answer sequence, such as those taught in the Ancient Mysteries. In some ballad refrains, the child or maid is called 'The Weaver's Bonny', a name of magical significance.

If the Traveller fails to answer the questions correctly, he or she may not pass the Guardian.

In '*Inter diabolus et Virgo*', the virgin is to be the fiend's 'leman' or lover if she fails the test. Far from being an orthodox Christian propaganda motif, this derives from early Mystery sequences, and from the metaphysical proposition that the Guardian is that which prevents the soul from further progress. The questions are not merely to be answered, they are to be lived and fully apprehended by the Traveller.

O what is higher than the Tree  
And what is deeper than the Sea?

What is heavier than lead  
And what is better than the bread?

What is whiter than the milk  
And what is softer than the silk?

What is sharper than the thorn  
And what is louder than the horn?

What is greener than the grass  
And what is worse than a woman was?

With the exception, perhaps of the very last question, these verses faithfully reflect some of the central elements of the mysteries of transformation, and although they have passed into widespread use, as in the above variant from Scotland, and into many fragmentary children's songs, they are not mere poetic conventions.

The symbols are Tree, Sea, Lead, Bread, Milk, Silk, Thorn, Horn, Grass and Woman. Their meanings are found described at length throughout our main text, and are the obvious foundational keys of the natural Mysteries.

Replies tend to be less consistent than the questions, and here we may indeed detect the effects of rationalizing and Christian 'sin' motifs.

O Heaven is higher than the Tree  
And Hell is deeper than the Sea.

Sin is heavier than lead  
The blessing's better than the bread.

Snow is whiter than the milk  
And down is softer than the silk.

The pies [magpies] are greener than the grass  
And the Devil's worse than woman ever was!

At this point, in some versions, the Devil flies away in flames. We may point out that the ludicrous concept of the Christian Devil is indeed worse than the more potent and ancient symbol of the Otherworld Woman, so perhaps the ballad has more subtle and humorous aspects than might at first be thought.

Similar questions and answers are found in the ballad 'Captain Wedderburn's Courtship', which involves a ritual question-and-answer sequence in which the chastity of a maiden is at stake.

The Challenge and the Riddles survive through time in the common imagination, and are still used today, though we should not fall into the trap of 'psychologizing' this essentially magical operation.

The set of riddles given above, and their answers, will repay meditation in the magical and imaginative context of the Otherworld Journey. During attuned operation with material of this type, fresh questions and answers frequently arise within the mind of the initiate. One typical set is;

What is the Bell that cannot be rung?  
What is the Song that cannot be sung?  
What is the Book that cannot be written?

Perhaps the most famous magical riddle of all is that found in Arthurian legend, and in various ballad and song forms. In this motif, the hero is plighted to a woman who is extremely ugly and extremely beautiful by turns. She asks him the riddling question, 'Would you rather have me fair by night or by day?', to which he correctly replies, 'Let it

be as you will.' Alternatively she challenges him with the question, 'What does womankind want most of all?' and he correctly replies 'Her own way.'

The first question and answer represents the mystery of the Goddess, who is both light and dark, foul and fair. When the knight or hero answers with the ancient mystery formula 'Let it be as you will,' she transforms her appearance to that of beauty for ever. This sequence is also shown by the actions of Thomas the Rhymer and the Queen of Elfland at the foot of the Tree of Transformation.

The second variant of the question represents this same mystery at work in the everyday human world, in a rather wry manner, but this answer, also, attunes to magical symbolism.

Impossible tasks feature in ancient lore, and several riddling songs utilize such challenges:

Tell her to make me a cambric shirt  
*Parsley Sage Rosemary and Time*  
Without a seam and without needle work,  
*And then she'll be a true love of mine.*

Tell her to wash it in yonder dry well,  
Where water never was nor drop of rain fell.

Tell her to hang it on yonder sharp thorn,  
That never bore blossom since Adam was born.

And when these tasks are finished and done  
It's I will marry her under the Sun.

The replies from the maiden are as follows:

Tell him to find me an acre of land  
Between the salt water and the sea sand.

Tell him to plough it all with a ram's horn  
And plant it all over with one peppercorn.

Tell him to reap it with a sickle of leather  
And winnow the chaff with a little bird's feather.

We might reasonably guess that the maiden's verses should conclude with the words:



And when his tasks are finished and done  
Tell him I'll marry him under the Moon.

Such riddles, once widespread as part of courtship rituals, stem from deep and potent sources, and may be said to be the descendants of pagan magical and religious ceremonies only in the sense that these same potent roots manifested in the pre-Christian cultures. Due to intentional suppression by orthodoxy, such lore passed into oral tradition, where it still remains.

The elements of the impossible tasks listed in the song work on three levels — sexual, magical and spiritual, and it takes on a further magical significance when we consider that in longer versions of the ballad, the male partner is an Otherworld being, either a 'dead man' or 'an Elf'.

The sexual level relates to physical intercourse and generation.

The magical level relates to the transforming mysteries that operate through the male and female genetic lines, when aroused in union. This is a higher harmonic of the sexual union, but does not necessarily include physical intercourse.

As we have outlined above in the preceding chapters, this transforming power is aroused in magic by an exchange between beings in different worlds, who cause energetic patterns or modes of consciousness to occur by their polarity and common union in the Mystery.

The spiritual level is further divided into two potential modes of understanding and realization:

1. The man and woman of the song may be said to represent the God and Goddess, the divine male and female power, whereupon the separate symbols become stellar, or astrological.
2. The magical union of the lower harmonic or the riddle-ritual can produce an incarnation of the Son of Light. The thorn verse is also found in some variants of the Corpus Christi Carol as:

At the Bed's Head there flowers a Thorn  
That never so blossomed since Adam was born.

This is the Thorn upon which the maiden has to hang her magical shirt without seams, and it is also the Thorn Tree of Commencement and Birth. Some variants of the Corpus Christi Carol have a maiden sowing, so we now know what she is sowing and for what end the garment is destined. The Thorn also features in the legends of Joseph of Arimathea, and the Glastonbury folklore relating to the Grail.

The apparent problem of reconciliation between the literary corpus of Arthurian legend and the oral body of traditional lore is resolved by the interwoven symbols offered in the oral tradition itself.

To understand this situation fully, we should never forget that the literary expositions of the Western Mysteries are derived from oral tradition, and that the most powerful secrets of all Mysteries are transferred by word of mouth only. Such communications are not made in secret Temples at all, but in songs such as the riddle verses quoted above. They may be activated on each or on all of the three levels according to the ability and will of the individual who works with them. But they cannot be activated fully without the concerted action and common union that arises from the UnderWorld.

There is a frequent tendency in occult literature, particularly modern writings which have little or no grasp of the essentials of the Western lore, to emphasize the unique or balanced or bisexual quality of the so-called adept. Without the vital polarity working shown the Tradition, this bisexuality is spurious, and on other levels may actually be a form of 'evil', for it is a minor reflection of the frozen isolation of the fallen angels, a type of spiritual refusal to relate. While it is true to suggest that the developed male or female is ultimately bisexual, or balanced, this balance comes from potent and passionate relationship with the inner powers, and not from separation.

The traditional riddles quoted should be understood in the light of magical symbolism, and may be re-enacted as imaginative visions, or as actual rituals in the simplest possible sense. They will be found to be effective and responsive to such an approach.

For those who find that such material generates replies from the Otherworld, it may be valuable to remember that

not all riddles are posed as questions. In magical work, many significant exchanges between worlds occur in apparent reverse to the human perception. The mechanics or meta-mechanics of the reversal are shown in various diagrams, and the effect upon regular or serially biased awareness is confusion, until this relationship is grasped.

Riddles, in such a context, will often appear as Answers. The Traveller must then supply the Questions demanded by the Answers. If the Answers are not Questioned correctly, the road remains closed.

This process is shown clearly in the importance attached to the asking or non-asking of questions in the Grail legends. At certain times or places, failure to ask a Question leads to disastrous results, while the same place under differing circumstances will be deadly to the Questioner, who should remain silent.

It might be suggested that the primary or lesser harmonics of the Mystery offer Questions that must be Answered, while the more powerful harmonics (those in the UnderWorld) offer Answers that must be Questioned. This is not to imply that answers must be challenged or criticized in the usual sense, but that the given answers must be balanced with the implied questions that they need to make a whole unit.

The secret of obtaining Answers before their Questions are asked is, of course, the secret of the prophetic powers of Merlin, Thomas, and the many other British seers. This function is not to be confused with the generally popular 'clairvoyance' in any way.

Similar situations are theorized in modern physics, where particles are found to arrive at their destinations before they have left their point of origin. The worlds are founded upon riddles, whichever way we turn.

## DOWN IN YON FOREST

- 1 Down in yon forest there stands a hall.  
The Bells of Paradise I heard them ring,  
Is covered all over with purple and pall,  
And I love my lord Jesus above anything.
- 2 All in that hall stands a bed  
Is covered all over with purple and red.
- 3 All on that bed there lyeth a knight,  
His wounds do bleed with main and might.
- 4 All from his wounds there runs a flood,  
The one half runs water and the other half blood.
- 5 At the bed foot there lies a hound  
A-licking the blood as it daily runs down.
- 6 At the bed head there stands a stone  
With Corpus Christi written thereon.

### **Down in Yon Forest**

The song 'Down in Yon Forest' or 'The Corpus Christi Carol' exists in several variants, from medieval popular tradition, with parallels in folklore tradition through the centuries. It offers a clear link between the courtly and literary Grail legends, and the protean oral traditions, and gives us an

important key to the operation of the UnderWorld Journey, during its Returning or Redeeming mode.

If the elements of this carol are assembled as a vision, and compared with the vision of Thomas Rhymer, we find that they form part of one another. 'The Corpus Christi Carol' shows the symbolic expression of the human or upperworld, while the vision of Thomas shows how this same pattern is found in the UnderWorld. The union of the two visions is shown on our book cover. There is no suggestion that the Scottish ballad and the English carol are intentionally composed to fit one into the other; nor are they usually found connected in this manner in the popular imagination.

We are examining certain esoteric or unusual symbolic connections that float freely in the common oral lore, and which have many significant ramifications. The symbolic elements are more enduring and important than the distribution or origin of the specific songs themselves.

'Over yonder's a Hall' or 'Down in Yon Forest' operates in a twofold sequence, the first part internalizing, the second externalizing, the order of symbolic progression.

#### Sequence One:

A totem bird leads us to a Forest.  
In the Forest is a dying Orchard.  
In the Hall is a Bed.  
In the Bed is a Wounded Knight.

#### Sequence Two:

From the Wounds runs a flood of blood and water.  
At the bed foot a hound licks up the blood.  
At the bed head sits a maiden sewing.  
Above the bed (or at its head) stands a stone marked  
'Corpus Christi'.

The complete sequence is assembled by recourse to three variants of the carol, and is one of the main visions connected with the Holy Grail. The inward moving sequence represents the state of humankind, the Fallen Worlds, and the separation of the individual entity from the vitalizing powers of the UnderWorld.

The external flowing sequence shows the streams of blood and water which traditionally issued from Christ's wounds, and which were associated with the sacrificial wounds of the pagan Divine Kings. These streams enter into the UnderWorld, and become the roaring sea and the river of blood which the initiate encounters during the Journey.

The Hound, the creature of Hell, licks the blood, while the Maiden Sewing is properly associated with the stream of water in tradition. She is the Feminine Power who mediates death and birth, and she sews the Silver Thread. In the ballad 'Giles Collins' she also washes the Stone in the River, to cause a hero's death.

The Stone at the Bed Head, or over the Bed, is the symbol of Christ as Keystone of the Temple or Arch of Heaven, and is also the sacred stone of Kingship, the Lia Fal, revered in Celtic Irish Tradition.

This curious imagery therefore combines orthodox and pagan lore into a coherent vision, which shows not only the state of the fallen worlds and the human dissociation or wounded impotence, but also the means of redemption. The rivers of water and blood are not only the issue from the Knight or King's side, but they are the issue from Christ Crucified, and they flow down into the UnderWorld, as indicated by the figures of the Sewing Maiden and the Hound.

In another sense the blood and water (or seed) represent the time-bound streams of man and woman kind, in a perpetual cycle of suffering and separation. Only in the UnderWorld do they come together as the Middle Way of the culminating vision.

These two streams, rivers, or seas, of salt water and blood, are experienced by the initiate as the Arousal of the Blood, and the Presence of the Ancestors. To gain the Tree of Transformation, one passes beyond these rivers to an island of temporary rest, at the foot of the Tree of Transformation.

In a certain sense, Thomas and the Queen *are* the Seed and the Blood during the ritual of Bread and Wine. After the partaking of Bread and Wine, the two streams reappear, and unite into a third. These are the Three Roads of the last vision. The Stream of Blood is the road of Thorns, the Stream of Water is the Broad Road, while their unity is the Middle Way.

The Union has to be brought alive within a human physical body, which is why initiates of this system choose to return to the outer world to mediate the energies in whatever way they may according to circumstances.

The Middle Stream, of transformed Seed and Blood, rises back up the Transformed Tree, to cure the Wounded Knight. On a higher level or mode, the power rises again towards the Keystone, which represents a cosmic union of the Right and Left Hand Pillars of the Tree of Life.

In the Descent into the UnderWorld, the initiate follows in the footsteps of the Son of Light who Harrowed Hell to set the shadow images free. Each individual may repeat this process and bring it alive in his own body, and only in this manner, as the tradition asserts, will the world be truly changed and cured.

The human Journey is a lesser mirrored image of the Divine Quest. The very lowest point of the UnderWorld pivots upon a rough stone or crystal, which is the Crown of Lucifer in the planetary body. This same stone, in its Universal or Stellar reflection, is the Stone Corpus Christi. The active vehicle for mediation between the two, the completion of the circuit or Shortened Way, is the human body.

By taking the UnderWorld Journey, the initiate follows a Path which is radically different from those offered by religion or standard magical methods, but it is a miniature or microcosmic unit of the same Path taken by the Son of Light.

# **Part Three: Entering the UnderWorld**





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## **The UnderWorld Narrative**

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The following pages should be used as a story, similar to the old fairy-tales, and read to a gathering of people, who relax and employ their imagination to build up the simple images employed in the tale. Like all fairy-tales, it grows more powerful with familiarity and does not wear thin, but reveals an increasing depth of symbolism and meaning arising from within the gathered group.

The notes which follow the story give some insight into the magical operation involved, and both the story and the notes should be read and re-read by the individual who intends to lead or partake in such a journey.

For those who wish to use the narrative in meditation, a recorded version with specially composed music is available from the author in cassette form, by application to the Publishers.

### **The UnderWorld Narrative**

(Music, customary opening signs, etc.)

#### *Voice*

You have decided to take a journey, an Otherworld Journey. Like any journey, in any world, it will have clear and definite stages; but the Otherworld Journey is easier in many ways than outerworld travelling, for you are carried onwards by your own awareness, and your own will.

If you meet with difficulties upon the way, they come from within yourself, and not from anywhere else. To return from the Otherworld Journey is easy, and instantaneous. Once you have travelled an inner path, you do not need to completely retrace your steps, but merely will yourself gently back to wherever you are sitting at this moment, your moment of initiation. The Otherworld Journey demands effort at visualization, but the Outerworld Return is achieved by a sign or signal that you know and recognize. (*The sign is given here or visualized.*)

The Otherworld which you are going to visit is known very well to you, but it is not in the past or the future, but in the living present within. This is where it always has been, and always will be, present within your own awareness. The landscape and beings of the Otherworld are real within their own dimension, and should not be treated as fantasies or illusions. If you regard them as such they will respond as such, and your experience of the Otherworld will dissolve into a meaningless dream. If you recognize the reality of the inner beings they will behave according to the laws of the world in which they live, and of which they are an integral part. It may be that you have not visited this Otherworld for a long period of outer time, and you should have a firm grasp of the simple laws that hold it together during your stay therein.

One: Be aware of your intention to keep to the way that leads to whatever you seek.

Two: Do not fear distractions, do not follow them.

Three: Respond to those who give you love, and respect those who act as guardians.

With these three simple rules, you can pursue your path in peace, to whatever you will find at its end. But first you have to find the path, which is not as far away as you might think, nor is it as difficult or dangerous as you have been led to believe! As you listen, you are sitting in a place that leads directly to the path; and now the path opens up before you, within your own awareness and nowhere else.

The first step is merely to pass from the Outerworld to the Innerworld. This is achieved by relaxing, and breathing carefully in rhythm, with your eyes closed. (*Here a musical sequence, or other known signal or pulse for passing within is given.*)

Gradually you become aware of tiny points of light upon a dark blackness. They are the stars in a night sky, and they are above you as you look at them. You are lying upon the ground, looking directly up at the stars. The sky is clear, and the stars are suddenly bright and cold. The earth beneath you is hard, and it is winter. You stand up and see that you are between two huge upright stones. You look ahead, and see a faint path across the plain, lit only by starlight.

You take a few steps forward, and a crescent moon rides in the sky ahead. You walk briskly down the path, and the air is cold, clean, fresh and exciting. You breathe deeply, and feel fit and full of power. The path seems familiar and yet intriguing, and you feel that it leads to a secret and special place.

Across the plain you walk, and gradually your path slopes down between shadowy hills, down and down into a valley with a stream running through it. The way ahead is guarded by two huge hills, one on each side of the valley. For a moment you look up at them, and fires flicker from their tops. You realize that the way is watched, and that you have been allowed to pass through in safety.

Now the ground levels out, and ahead of you a mist is rising. The path leads straight into the mist, and above it you can see the moon, now growing full, a white disc above the strange swirling clouds that flood across the pathway. You pause, and then step into the mist.

For a moment you lose your sense of direction, but the path feels clear beneath your feet, and you follow it carefully. As your eyes adjust to the misty light you see that the way is built of countless numbers of stones, worn smooth, as if by the passage of many feet through thousands of years. Each stone shines gently with a very slight pale light, like the reflection of a full moon.

The ground around you is growing soft and marshy, and you catch glimpses of long reedy grass and pools of water through the mist. The air is growing damper and somehow warmer, as you follow the ancient stones of the pathway. Around you are the muffled sounds of the marsh; it is alive with the secret life of under-roots and beneath-stones. There are creatures that crawl and slide and hop, there are splashes

and faint cries of fear and alarm from the water.

Nothing touches the path. The path leads on into the swirling mists which thicken and thicken until you see nothing, hear nothing, and only feel the ground beneath your feet.

You stop. You look, but see only a white mass of warm swirling vapour. You feel a closeness, a presence upon the path ahead, but you do not know what it is. Do you dare to walk forward? You will yourself to take another step . . . you want to shout out, 'Who's there? Who are you?', but you keep silent.

A tiny cold wind blows along the path from behind you, parting the thick mist suddenly. You see a huge lump of shadow, a towering black shape with massive spreading horns, and it bars the way utterly. The mist parts fully now, and the light of a bright full moon streams down upon the way. You see that the beast before you is a cow . . . a white cow with long curved horns. She looks directly at you, and after a moment, begins to turn away. As she turns, you see that she has a curious mark upon her shoulder. She begins to walk ahead of you now, guiding you along the path. You follow her confidently, she knows the way, and the mists return to swirl and blow across the swamp.

Now you come to a branching of the way, where it parts into three. The path to the right opens out suddenly into a broad paved roadway that curves easily into the distant mists. It looks inviting and interesting, and was obviously built for some special purpose. The path to the left curves steeply off behind you, back up to the watching hills. It is piled with loose stones, and you see it climb up and up out of sight. It seems that either path will take you out of the marsh, and out of the constant mists; but the way ahead, the continuation of the path on which you stand, leads straight on into the steaming clouds of vapour.

At this junction of the ways is a little rise of ground, and on it grow a few small trees and bushes, dominated by a tall deeply carved standing stone.

Look closely at the image which guards the parting of the ways.

The warm mists swirl about it as soon as you have seen it, and so you turn to consider the right hand way. The

broadly paved stones are littered with objects, with metal rings and bracelets, carved gems and precious ancient workmanship.

Now you consider the left hand way, and just beyond the junction there is a little mound of stones with a skull set into a niche within. This skull looks up the pathway, and seems to warn against coming back down.

Which path is best? Which way should you turn? All three seem to carry both opportunity and danger. Suddenly, the cow stamps her hoof, and sets off down the middle way into the mist. In an instant you realize that for you there is no question of hesitation, no doubt as to the way ahead. You follow her into the unknown.

All around you now is water, with steam swirling from it. You hear a curious bubbling sound, and tall rough rocks appear on either side of the path which weaves a serpent way between them. The water rises, and the steam is heady and hot, with a curious smell of earth and minerals. The path coils round and round in a tight spiral, heading always to the right between the rocks.

Suddenly you realize that the white cow has disappeared! The path stops before a huge tumble of natural rocks, out of which pour streams of hot water, and the rocks are shining with a wet red colour like blood.

Growing up out of the rock is an enormous tree, that reaches far far up into the steamy air. A curious glow seems to emerge from the stones, and you can see by this earthlight that the tree has an enormous crown of rustling branches and leaves. As the wind blows, you can hear many birds and animals moving and calling within the branches.

THE PATH HAS STOPPED, THE GUIDE IS GONE  
FROM HERE YOU TRAVEL ON ALONE.  
LOOK CLOSELY IN BETWEEN THE STONES,  
AND YOU WILL SEE A PATHWAY LEADING DOWN.  
DOWN INTO THE MOTHER EARTH  
WHOSE DEEP WOMB GIVES THE WATERS BIRTH,  
DOWN INTO THE STEAM AND DARK,  
WHERE NO LIGHT GIVES YOU WAY OR MARK —  
DOWN AND DOWN AND DOWN YOU CRAWL  
INTO THE DEEPEST DEEPEST HALL.

## THE UNDERWORLD INITIATION

DOWN BEYOND ALL SENSE OR RHYME,  
 DOWN BEYOND ALL THOUGHT OR TIME,  
 DOWN AND DOWN AND DOWN YOU GO,  
 UNTIL YOU HEAR A SOUND BELOW:  
 A SOUND MYSTERIOUS AND DEEP  
 THAT THROBS AND WAKES YOUR BLOOD FROM SLEEP —  
 THE SOUND THAT BRINGS THE WATERS FORTH  
 OUT OF THE LIVING HEART OF EARTH:  
 A SOUND OF WHIRLING RUSHING AIR,  
 A SOUND OF BLAZING BURNING FIRE,  
 AND FROM YOUR NARROW SINGLE WAY  
 YOU SEE A GLOW LIKE COMING DAY,  
 AND AS WITH EVERY DARK-FILLED NIGHT —  
 YOU LEAP OUT AT THE END . . .  
 TO LIGHT!

*(Narrative pauses here. Suitable music, or silent pause. At the end of this period, the agreed signal for returning is given.)*

‘Awake now! Awake! For you have been blessed by the power that moves your life within you. Awake, and return peacefully to your Outerworld.

THE WAY IS SHORT AND CLEAR,  
 OPEN YOUR EYES, AND YOU ARE SITTING . . .  
 HERE!

Depart in peace, and remember all that you have seen and heard and felt. Take it with you to transform the outer world; let it pass from you as power into all that is alive . . . that the land may be blessed, and the growing plants, and the creatures of the land, and the men and women and children in your care.

FOR WE ARE PRIESTS AND PRIESTESSES OF POWER  
 UNTIL THE END OF TIME

In the name of .....

*(Closing music if required. A period of readjustment. Then notes*

*should be made immediately, or if a group, there should be discussion with notes taken. Each individual should also write up their experiences later, as material is often triggered by later circumstances, or memories.)*

### **Operative Notes for Narrative**

The structure of the narrative is fourfold:

1. Instructional commencement;
2. magical action (the journey);
3. contemplative/mystical (inner reaction);
4. outer dedication — giving out to the land the energies released.

These four stages correspond to the four quarters of the magical circle. They are not necessarily of the same duration in serial time, and may be varied objectively or subjectively according to circumstances or requirements.

#### *Operation of the magical processes*

Despite the assurance regarding the ease and safety of passing between the worlds (a perfectly valid assurance for the beginner operating alone or in a group, where limited action is usually safeguarded by inner or outer mediators of the early stages of the Mystery), the action calls for a deliberate opening of the way by an experienced operator, during the 'breathing' and 'opening' references in the text. The narrative may be read or recorded with suitable music for playback.

Note that the would-be initiate is not helped through this opening, and certainly not *put* through it. The experienced mediator merely energizes the opening of the 'Pillars' that leads to the innerworld about to be described. The new traveller is free to choose how he or she will respond, according to personal abilities and limitations.

The narrative is keyed to a specific physical location, as well as the innerworld described, so it is essential for at least one participant to have passed-within at the physical locus. Without this experience of attuning, the journey will not be fully keyed to the innerworld required. Most symbolic



or Otherworld journeys are actually keyed to physical places or sites, and for this to work, a human must have made the journey at the actual site concerned. But there is no necessity for it to be always made there, or that each passing within must be done at the actual locus.

Ideally, the most powerful situation would be a group of experienced mediators who regularly pass within upon the site of the physical manifestation of the Otherworld concerned. The physical body becomes attuned to the site by this process, and the power available is considerably amplified.

An experienced mediator should be present to visualize and energize all stages of the journey, with the basic rule that the new traveller is always free to choose at the various stages. The guiding action of the mediator stops, however, when the initiate enters the passage down into the earth, regardless of previous experience, with the words 'The Path has stopped, the guide has gone, from here you travel on alone.'

From this point each individual travels alone, no matter how new or old they are to the experience. The adept may then use whatever ability in invocation he or she has, during the culmination or devotion, but is generally receptive after the inner power has been contacted.

This change of mode from active to passive is very important in operations of this type, and is the key to success and harmonious working.

The totem beast, it should be added, is not symbolic of the mediator, but is an innerworld being in its own right, which works for all travellers equally.

The closing section of the narrative should be a very deliberate emerging and closing down, carried out as effectively as possible by the adept.

### *Notes on the Journey*

The first emerging between the pillars leads to a night and winter landscape, with a deliberate radical alteration of situation and position. The traveller has moved from indoors to outdoors, sitting in comfort to lying on hard ground, warmth to cold, known to unknown, etc.

This is not an easy transition to visualize, for a beginner,

but with a properly energized opening-of-the-way, it should make an effective transfer providing there is some suspension of disbelief on the part of the initiate. It is also intended as a means of getting travellers moving as quickly as possible, not allowing opportunities to drift or sit about examining the inner landscape.

Note that although the script moves in four stages around the circle, ESWN, the inner action reverses this direction (i.e. Instructional East, Magical South, Mystical West, Active giving North, as described above).

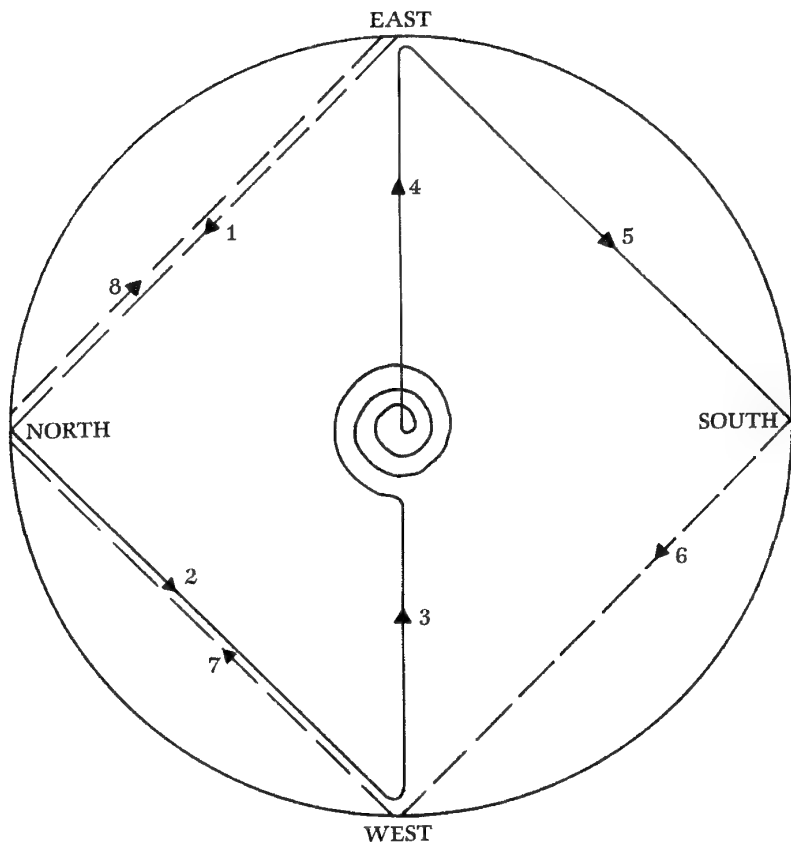
Inwardly, the journey starts at the North, in Winter. From the plain beneath the stars, the traveller moves from earth to water (travelling N—W), and then moves inwards and downwards, towards the centre of the metaphysical cycle, reaching where the elements originate in the heart of all Being. From here, the traveller emerges to the dawning light of the East, and should move to the South, or maximum Light. In culmination, the circle is continued to the West as reception or contemplation, around to the North as fulfilment and completion by giving, and so emerging again in the East to commence ordinary outer life afresh.

1. Commence initial 'Journey'. Introduction.
2. Emerge North, pass to West.
3. Path to Waters and Tree of Life.
4. Down tunnel to UnderWorld, out to East.
5. Increasing light to South.
6. Contemplation to West.
7. Return to North for action of giving out.
8. Begin again in Outer World.

(See Diagram 7.)

This order of motion is a circular expression of the Secret Way across the Abyss, suggested in the Qabalah. This mode of consciousness is extremely important in the Western Mysteries, particularly the specific Otherworld Mysteries of Britain.

The 'secret way' actually passes *through* the Abyss, but by a known and operable path, rather than in chaos. It was this path, for example, that the Gnostics believed was used by Christos to incarnate secretly, by passing the orders of



**Diagram 7. Map of the UnderWorld Journey.**

The 8 Stages of the Journey are distributed around the Wheel of Life, according to the Four Directions. The pattern is not a Spiral (as in our Wheel of Life diagram 2) but a serpentine shape that cuts across the regular cycle.

1. EAST. The Journey begins: the preamble to the main visualization.
2. NORTH: The opening Vision of the Night Sky, Stars, the Stone Gate.

3. WEST: Descending into the Valley, then following the Totem Beast to the centre of the Maze.
4. CENTRE-EAST: Rebirth in the UnderWorld leads to a dawning of new consciousness.
5. SOUTH: Contemplation/meditation increases this new Light.
6. WEST: The Light flows through the organism as love and compassion.
7. NORTH: A physical realignment bridges the gap between Inner and Outer consciousness.
8. EAST: Return to Outer World to mediate new Understanding.

The Primary movements are 2/3/4/5 or North/West/East/South.

The Secondary movements are the Star-Wise cycle 6/7/8 or South/West/North/East.

The Secondary movements are an Inner analogue of the cycle of incarnation and birth.

The Primary Movements are an Inner analogue of The Harrowing of Hell, or the descent of the Son of Light into the UnderWorld. (Shown in Celtic mythology as Arthur's raid upon Annwvyn.)

angels via a power pattern that would not be visible to the innerworlds until his return.

The way is called 'The Path of the Thief'. The Roman Christian variant of this 'secret' was worked into the myth of the 'Harrowing of Hell', which is a restatement of the quest of Arthur to the Otherworld, where he and his band of heroes descend below to gain gifts for their people. This is the origin of the later medieval allegories of the Holy Grail, a sophistication of the Cauldron of the Otherworld that was gained by the Welsh Arthur.

The principle is found in all metaphysics, and is especially important for the practice of effective magic. Whereas the Elements and related powers have a specific cycle (symbolized by the Four Directions around the Circle and epitomized in nature by the Four Seasons, etc.), humankind is able to work this same 'secret path' as was taken by the Son of Light (under whatever name), either through the power of spiritual mediation, or through the inherent divinity in mankind.

More accurately stated, and less susceptible to propaganda and corruption, the Path is a fact of metaphysics, which is

open to all and any able to assemble the component energies and put them into action. Despite this fact, most individuals work this way under the blessing or protection of some symbolic great being, and the path commences in the North under the power of Auriel (for the magician who works Qabalah), or of the Sisters at the Back of the North Wind who mediate the death power of the Goddess; and in either case the commencement is via the gift of grace, or reflected light and wisdom from the stars, in a manner gentle enough to be received without imbalance.

The travelling N—W is the breaking-down, the return to primeval water as the mist grows thicker in the narrative imagery. The Path is well indicated, and has been well travelled. Those that have gone before have left light in every stone for us to follow.

Perhaps the earliest Travellers would have had to struggle their way through the elemental earth/water dissolution, hence their praise as heroes in the folk sagas and tales, but the continued effort of those who have gone before has made the way clear and safe, providing the rules suggested are followed carefully. There is always danger, the greatest being that of distraction, which for some people can occupy many lifetimes.

The watchers from the hilltops are symbolically in the Northern Quarter. They are *voluntary* Guardians of various sorts, both human and non-human. This was achieved in ancient time by a specific sacrifice whose reflection/phantom was set to watch the sacred site, to protect the people, and to communicate through chosen priestesses.

These Guardians were tied to the area 'between the worlds' for a set period of outer time, established by actual solar rotation (passage of planet around sun), after which they were released and replaced. On release, these individuals made their way via the Middle Path to the innerworlds of their Mystery, or returned around the great outside path to reincarnation. This is only the briefest summary of this important matter, which is dealt with at length elsewhere.

The Left Hand Path, therefore, as defined within the narrative, has a ban upon it, for the individual may travel up it at will (as a voluntary Guardian) but not back down,

as he/she is then subject to certain laws of limitation of energy, and must work through the power-pattern of the Guardian process. This definition covers various aspects of the Left Hand Path upon the Tree of Life, and will differ in intensity and in expression according to each individual. The greatly abused concepts of self-sacrifice, death, the devil, etc., are intimately connected with understanding and experience of this Path or group of Paths.

The Right Hand Path referred to, traverses the circle WSEN, and is the way of working out in the outer world, through major outer action, effective history etc. Strong individual cases upon this path may be leaders, dictators and the like, but more simply it represents a return to the outer group-world, with no desire to pursue the inner journey further. From an esoteric point of view, it is the Path of Distraction if misunderstood and misapplied.

The totem beast, the White Cow, has appeared during the dissolving phase of the work (refer also to alchemical symbols) and is a key image of the ancient lunar power. She is strength, fertility, motherhood, and her horns are the great horns of Power.

This guide is *not* the operating human adept, but a potent inner power focus. The mark upon her shoulder is extremely important, and is likely to vary for individuals, if it is present. This mark is usually the identifying symbol of the innerworld order to which the human initiate has affinities, or which is involved in the current magical operation. The totem beast is by no means limited to a mere fertility totem, and the place of the cow and the midwife Brigid in Celtic lore is vitally important to an understanding of the Western Mysteries. It is the Cow that brings you back to birthpoint after your dissolution.

The image cut into the stone that marks the crossroads works in a similar manner, but represents a 'higher octave' or deeper level of mediation. Whereas the totem beast carries the code of an innerworld order, the marking stone carries the symbol of a great being, or 'god'.

One might expect the image to be that of the Son of Light, but others also occur. Strictly speaking the image is likely to be that of the Hung God, the sacrificed sun rather than the triumphant sun, a key which pre-dates Christian use.

The 'secret' image here is that of a dark figure in tattered cloak, who is impaled or hung with arms outstretched. He has four faces, one for each road.

The entire journey occurs during the phases of the Moon, from dark to full. This is not a journey of 'rising in the planes' as is commonly done in modern magic or meditation, but the way to light through darkness. It goes Underground at the point at which normal pathworking would move round into the Sun. By so doing, it traverses the secret way to the Mother, which activates the Light Son/Daughter energies within each individual.

The complete vision involves a realization of the unity of the Male/Female powers with and without as One (the so-called Son of Light is actually bisexual). The mediation phase of the narrative, however, is left unguided, to develop according to the needs of each individual. The last stage of the journey is made alone, and the Presence is met in silence.

Prior to this stage, however, the guide (cow) disappears without the Traveller being aware of her passing. In other words, once the initiate has reached this point in the journey, the guiding power is no longer needed. At this stage the dissolving power has reached the centre of the elemental circle (see Diagram), and some real awareness should be achieved of both the Elemental Powers and of the Tree of Life, as living forces, and not mere intellectual definitions.

It is this awareness that causes the opening between the stones to occur, and the initiate crawls down this alone. For the trained adept, who is able to operate the specific tuning required for 'the Path of the Thief', this is a magical pattern which becomes established and potentially unlimited with continued application and development.

For the less experienced Traveller, the phasing and direction of the narrative up to this stage creates a field of consciousness which enables him/her to achieve the Entrance for the first time (in their current lifetime).

There may be more difficulty in subsequent experiences of the Journey, wherein this first initiation has to be reinforced with training and magical exercises.

There is a clear and intended parallel at this stage with the ancient ritual initiations involving rock passages, using womb and tomb symbolism to trigger off awareness from

earth-birth to human-birth, and finally to inner-birth in full awareness. This use of analogous keys will open awareness into regions normally inaccessible to the everyday conditioned modes of reception.

The chanting suggested during the journey into the deep is the 'word' of female/male union. In this case, the Word used is likely to be that of the Mother Filled with Light, and the initiate should be familiar with this Word of Power in advance, although this is not essential for the operation to be successful (AMA AIMA AMEN).

At the emergence into light, the individual is left free to respond as best as possible to the power. Music may be used here, but a period of silence is essential. The journey down through the earth has not had any intentional terrors worked into it, but they may be present in the awareness of the Traveller.

For a male, the terrors may be in the form of the Dark Mother of Death, whereas for a female it may be the image of the restrictive God. This image is the Horned God of the ancients that the Christians turned into the devil. He is both hunter and controller of beasts, and in the Tarot symbolism is a potent Guardian upon the Left Hand Path (the God of Guardians all) but not in any way 'evil'.

The way to pass Beings of this sort is to ask them, without fear, what Secret they guard.

The answer will change with changed awareness or circumstances, as the secret may be a knot within one's own consciousness, or a more potent magical secret altogether. Sometimes the two are tied together. Without Beings of this sort, limited awareness (which is the expression of entity) would become unlimited, resulting in wild unbalance.

This is why both God and Goddess of this sort are Hunters, for the Wild Hunt collects the phantoms of the recently dead. These Beings are expressions of the powers of essential limitation, and hold the secrets of the central or Solar consciousness of restriction. They arise as energy constructs transfer from one state or rate to another. These little-understood metaphysical laws have direct crude analogies in materialist physics.

Another way of stating this set of laws is the concept that whatever limits in one direction liberates in another. To



activate such keys beneficially, they must be mediated as powers of liberation. The direction of energy flow must be from an unrequired state to a required state, and obvious reversals, errors and limitations upon imbalanced demands result in misunderstanding of the nature of 'liberty', the 'devil', 'freedom from restriction' and similar subtle matters.

In the operation of magic in particular, many initiates are deterred by their first experience of a flow of power greater than that recognized in normal life, which appears to be in conflict with cherished notions of selfhood, personality, role in life, etc. One of the great problems of magic is not 'getting it to work', but balancing its operation in a manner that will not arouse hostility and fear, both within oneself and in others. Hence the strict 'moral' conditioning required for magical work.

After passing any personal Guardians of the Heart, the Presence is encountered. An experienced mediator may invoke or link in whatever manner possible at this point in the Journey; and if the Path has been travelled well, the Power is present, and no further effort is needed in this final stage, which can be totally receptive.

Narratives of this type are particularly useful in dissolving disbelief and making initial magical experiences for beginners, but there is no theoretical limit to their effectiveness, and they are not mere 'infant's class' material by any means.

During the silent pause, experiences will vary considerably. They are likely to range from states of consciousness in contact with the Mother Goddess, through to key symbols for future use and development, visions, and many other types of realization.

Examples of the types of symbolism encountered include:

1. A vast underground cavern, lit by glowing sourceless light;
2. a cave with an ill-defined (or well-defined) Mother Goddess image within the rock at one end;
3. a garden in open sunlight at the centre of the earth, in which grows an apple tree;
4. a massive cyclopean Temple, with a huge altar at one end;
5. an image of stars shining at the bottom of a pool or well.

All of the above are brief examples from actual workings of the narrative, but none convey the sense of Presence. Such images are merely feedback to the brain, generating acceptable images therein. These images may be true representations of the past or future, or actual experiences of constructed inner worlds.

In some cases other beings are felt to be present, generally unseen, though sometimes clearly presented. During one working, the Travellers (male and female were present) saw an image of a well pool with two serpents around it. In this pool shone the stars. This is similar to the key vision of Merlin and the Dragons. As the working which gave rise to this vision was carried through on the site of an ancient spring focus, it linked with Celtic and pre-Celtic magical workings of prolonged periods.

The imagery of the Well, which gives vision through the Earth to beyond Time and Space into the greater universe, is not limited to the Celtic cultural stream, but such a vision is of great importance in the understanding or relationship between inner and outer powers.

The mere details of the vision are only a tiny part of its overall impact in terms of consciousness within the traveller, and intellectual assimilation of details is quite irrelevant to the actual experience itself, and therefore preparation or giving of clues to the experience is usually a waste of effort. Furthermore, one of the hallmarks of a genuine inner experience is that certain key images are shared by all involved, without prior preparation or information. For reasons of this sort, so-called 'occult secrecy' may be extremely important. The crude comparison may be made between someone who has read a book or seen photographs of a distant land, and who can talk in detail about the reflections that they have intellectually assimilated, and the experience of someone who has actually been to the place itself. More significant, the traveller can bring back gifts from the distant land, whereas the reader of travel books cannot.

The return journey is made rapidly and comfortably, without a retracing of steps. This is not as shocking a concept as one might imagine, and is rooted in the magical adage that the outermost World (the Kingdom of the Qabalist) is identical to the innermost (the Crown) after another manner

or mode of awareness and level of being. If the Traveller can achieve some realization of the Presence, the return journey has been made automatically at its conclusion. If necessary, a period of adjusting music can be added after the closing ritual phrases.

It should be noted that the closing phrases are extracts from an actual ritual, and that the initiate returns to the outer world to mediate the divine power, and not simply to retrace his steps and close it down behind him.

A clear division should be made, however, between effective realization of the inner Powers into the outer world, and mere 'day-dreaming' or 'entrancement'. The narrative makes a clear difference between the innerworld journey and dreaming, and this difference is carried right through to the conclusion in manifestation. It is for this reason that the conclusion is finalized by keywords from an established and potent ritual pattern, which locks the energies into the material world in specific ways.

Repeated workings of the narrative, and related material will reveal further extracts and insight into this particular ritual, which forms part of an ancient liturgy, centred around a rite known as *The Mask of the Bright One*.

## Appendix 1

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# The Tomb of a King

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### Introduction

The following report has been referred to during the main text, and in the preceding UnderWorld Narrative. It is the result of the so-called 'prophetic' or 'clairvoyant' function, in connection with the system of alteration of consciousness described in the preceding chapters.

The reader should be advised that the faculty or communicative sense employed is *not* similar to that of commercial clairvoyance, and is reminded that the gist of the material dealt with in the main text suggests that 'clairvoyance' does not, in fact, exist. Chapter 7, 'The Summoning', describes the process employed, and the report itself gives some further clues and information. Although certain individuals are born with such a perception, which also manifests in specific families through the generations, it is usually the result of a patient and disciplined arousal system, and forms no part of the popular concept of 'wizards that mutter'.

The King who appears in the report is a Sacred King, though not, perhaps, in the manner of modern books on paganism. Beings of this type are extremely important in the Western Tradition, and are not identical with the well-publicized Inner Plane Adepts of modern occultism, who would, in fact, also apply to the Sacred Kings for their wisdom and understanding.

As with any esoteric or dynamic and unusual material,

discretion is advised, and a leavening of humour. Not all ancient sites operate in the manner described, and some of them were never attuned to the system of symbolism and magic employed. The author does not encourage the reader to rush off and invite communication from the ancient ones at prehistoric sites, mainly because the time and energy involved are better spent on inner disciplines at home and at peace.

### **The Tomb of a King, at Les Monts Grantez, Jersey**

*26 September 1978*

This ancient prehistoric tomb is in an elevated and fairly isolated position, very well preserved, and only recently excavated by archaeologists (1912) who found it 'comparatively undisturbed'.

The King buried here had achieved his merge with the environment, and was still available as an inner entity for dialogue and interchange of communication. After an initial contact made by tuning to the site in meditation, the King later appeared (away from the site itself, as the contact unfolded or decoded itself) as an older man, very brown, with curly hair and black beard, and spiral cheek tatoos. His eyes appeared like large black stones, due to the visual effect of tattooing or colouring around the deep eye sockets. He wore clothing made of skins, a tight tunic and trousers tied around with sinews.

In communication he may be addressed as 'Earth-man' and 'Stone-King', the nearest modern language equivalents to two magical names. The first was his identity as king before physical death, the second an after-death name of transformation. He was the leader of a tribe or extended family of about fifty or sixty people at the time of his physical death, although he implied an influence over a greater number, through an obscure concept of family relationship that seemed to extend beyond the Islands to both Britain and Brittany.

Some time was spent attempting to elaborate this relationship, which was apparently of great importance in his culture, but which seems obscure to the modern intellect. The basic pattern was one in which various 'kings' could rule extended tribes and families over large distances,

without ever conflicting with one another. The patterns of social behaviour and warfare that resulted from this system were not similar to the modern concept of 'territory' or 'conquest' in any way, but seemed to be derived from 'loss of face' or a concept that meant '*change of roots in the family ground*'.

The discarnate King was responsible for communicating 'earth-peace' to his people, this being an energy that resulted from his merging with the environment, and finally emerging 'on the other side' of it as an entity of wholeness or integration, able to link and mediate through various stages of human and non-human evolution.

After initial contact, the old king was (and still is) present as a father figure, exactly as he was to those who linked with him thousands of years ago when this system of inner working was fully operational. There were several obscure intimations, difficult to translate into a contemporary world or universe-picture:

1. The King is now part of the solar system (?) or Universe (?), linked through the *stones* and the special structure of the dolmen and mound, which become an earth-power gate or amplifier for his awareness, a focus by which his differing viewpoint may be translated into one which is accessible to physical humans still on the planet.

The curious and difficult point about this concept is the accompanying awareness that (to the King) the solar system is inside the structure of the stones and in the very bones of the Earth itself and is in no way external or removed from it. He is able to communicate this awareness very clearly indeed, and it seems to have been essential to his people's development. The effect of this awareness on the modern consciousness is rather disturbing, and is quite different from the generally accepted reality-patterns currently used by mankind trying to relate to existence.

2. The purpose of the dolmen or passage grave is extremely precise and 'scientific'. A sealed chamber of massive stones, which have to be over a certain mass or size, is buried beneath a mound of earth. This causes certain natural processes to occur, directly due to the shapes and nature of the structure itself. This is usually aided by the knowledge and co-operation of the being or beings buried alive within it.

The aim is to achieve an integration with the earth environment, moving through it to other states of awareness (These are *in the earth*, according to the King, or more strictly speaking, the Earth is *outside the stars*, and is the gateway to them.) The actual physical structure is womblike, and was identified as a returning to the Mother. There is strict time rotation involved in the process, and a guardian was placed to ensure that there was no disturbance during this period of gestation prior to inner rebirth.

Other people were also interred, either at the same time, or at later stages of the development of the merge. The King suggested quite jovially that the process was voluntary, but implied a system of family obligation which could not be avoided, or a system which cast out those who did not merge when their time was due. This shocking occurrence was the greatest 'loss of earth root' that anyone could visualize, and was the equivalent of vile and obscene anti-human crime. The thought of anyone *not* wanting merge was repulsive in the extreme, and the process was a sought-after privilege that was retained through certain family ties, and could be passed on through a female line of descent.

Once the inner integration process had occurred, the chamber was then used for consultation and initiation. Entry was made through a tiny crawl passage, usually kept sealed and guarded by a restrained soul. This Guardian was a deliberately tied sacrifice, a human who was bound for a specific period to remain in an interim state close to the outerworld, to defend the chamber against break-in and tampering. After a certain number of years (solar cycles) the guard was free, and was replaced or rendered unnecessary by the success of the King's merging. In a 'fully achieved' chamber only the King remained, but he could link to specific ancestors in spirit ('*Fathers in the deep that earth is outside*'). The supplicant crawled in, and was left in the total darkness to communicate with the King.

The pattern is found clearly in modern magical practice, where the King is seated in the West, and one approaches him from the East, through the Pillars. The interesting point is that this King is fully able to relate to modern magical technique, and has various things to teach or communicate.

In a simple magical operation, designed to open up his

specific contact in a completely different place, far from his earth-site, the King calmly informed the operator of a mistake in the pattern of the ritual. When this error was corrected, the contact became much stronger.

The simple basis of this fraction of magical teaching was as follows:

In the tomb, the King is magically 'in the West', that is, at the end of the chamber, seated, and giving out the fullness of his awareness from his position in the depth of the womb. When an attempt was made to place him by image in the West of a modern magical Temple, he informed the operator that this was quite wrong, and that the operator should be in the West, visualizing the King approaching at the East. When this was done, the inner imagery reverted to the King's own Tomb, as if the two 'Wests' had come face to face.

Prior to tuning the energies in this manner, the link had been rather difficult and sporadic, causing the operator to be kept awake at night, to be aware of the King at unrequired moments, and giving a general sense of lack of tuning, searching and semi-blindness. Once the King's operational suggestion was adopted, the contact could be turned on or off at will, and became extremely balanced and clear.

The rule or pattern of tombs of this sort was general for all the dolmens and passage graves that are found in the Western culture, which can still be seen today. Some are empty and failed, but others retain their inner contact, and can be used.

One most interesting aspect of these curious 'generators' is that the flow is *two-way*. The inner King, locked in the earth-that-is-outside-the-stars learns about your awareness, and transmits it back to his people, while you learn about their awareness, and bring it forward into your own self. The King occupies a middle or mediating 'point' in this process, conveying a type of awareness that makes nonsense of the normal conception of 'time' and 'space'. To the King, 'time' is only valid as the rotational phase prior to his merging with the Earth; it had no meaning in his original outer life, nor does it have any meaning in his evolved inner state.

On attempting to convey the meaning of the flow of time, the response from the King was the equivalent of '*there is*



*no line of such a shape. There is only turning until you are inside the earth. From the little turning to the great turning that is inside the little turning. Inside the great turning is earth-peace.'*

## Appendix 2

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# **The Rosicrucian Vault as Sepulchre and Wedding Chamber**

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by  
Caitlin Matthews

Ex Deo Nascimur, in Jesu Morimur, per Spiritum Sanctum  
reviviscimus — *Fama Fraternitatis*

No mythology arises parthenogenically; it must be fertilized by existent bodies of symbology. The Rosicrucian impulse is no exception to this rule. I wish to discuss the Rosicrucian Vault in relation to this premise, with a view to making an intense synthesis of those themes which I have personally found relevant and provoking. The result is a continuous knot.

If we search for the sources of our knot we will be well rewarded, but this can only be achieved by the frustrating task of Penelope at her loom, unweaving her work endlessly until she stands with more threads than she has fingers to separate them. We stand to lose our thread here also unless we can distinguish the central strand around which the other threads are wound.

This central strand is that of Resurrection, particularly the Resurrection of Christ, an exposition of which concludes this essay. It can be observed that the Protestant ethic, from which the Rosicrucian manifestos drew their surface inspiration, had pared the rich symbology of the Christian faith down to its simplest constituents. Beggared of a rich Catholic tradition, the Protestant authors of the manifestos turned to gnostically influenced alchemical traditions,

incidentally breaking into a lode of early Christian, as well as pagan, symbolism, though this is not immediately apparent.

It may be argued that the Christian impulse has been rendered null and void in this century. I would say rather that a vast body of esoteric wisdom lies hidden, right under our noses, within the Christian tradition. It is partly neglected through over-familiarity and over-simplification of its holy mysteries, which nonetheless are as potent as earlier paradigms. The Rosicrucian experiment teaches us a lesson for our own time: that it is impossible to separate the twin slips of pagan and Christian stock which are too strongly grafted onto one another for any such separation.

The Rosicrucian manifestos do not strike us as overtly Christocentric: there is a good reason for this — Christian Rosenkreutz (hereafter referred to as C.R.) stands in the place of Christ. This is not a new observation, nor is it a device which is used solely within Rosicrucianism. It is employed throughout medieval literature — particularly of the more popular sort. *Piers Plowman* is but one example of the Everyman-Christ so dear to the hearts of the medieval peasantry. The more bourgeois appeal of the Grail legends has had a more lasting impact because they are grafted onto the national Matter of Britain. The *Perlesvaus*, the most Christianized Grail story, shows Perlesvaus (Perceval) as a perfect type of Christ, undergoing his trials in a marvellous medievalized Celtic Otherworld. C.R.'s legend is in the same mould as that of Christ and Perceval, as we shall be seeing.

This identification with the hero-initiate is crucially important for the practical, rather than the armchair, mystic: unless each of us can stand in the place of Christ (or Perceval or C.R.), the lessons of life cannot be assimilated, and we return to our Creator neither better nor worse off than when we entered incarnation. We must seek to transform our *prima materia* into the Hidden Stone through the process of Resurrection.

So this strong Christian strand lies at the core of our knot, but it is not the only thread we hold in our hands. There are deeper, earlier resonances which strike our ears faintly as though from the Hades-bound harp of Orpheus. The base note of the Rosicrucian chord is the Mother herself — the

Goddess. Around her and her avatars — Lady Venus, Dame Kind, Nature, Sophia — hinges the Great Work upon which C.R. is engaged. In the light of her presence, the Vault assumes some fantastic and unguessed-at shapes, which we will visit later.

Finally, there is the synthesis of these twin threads. When all the threads are reworked, the immense scale of the tapestry may be missed if we stand too close. This synthesis is the most speculative part of this essay; it can only be comprehended if the reader enters it himself. It is the loom of Creation and of Apocatastases.<sup>1</sup>

I have dealt only with those resonances — the places where the Vault ‘touched-down’ in its Tardis-like ambulation — which are most relevant to the themes of Sepulchre and Wedding-Chamber. I have left to others the task of mathematical computation and the arcane Rosicrucian logarithms of the Vault’s dimensions — these prove baffling to those esoteric innumerates such as myself. Mythological pot-holing and symbolic synthesis are my field. I cannot pretend to have explored the entirety of the Vault, nor indeed that honeycombed edifice, the Invisible Magical Mountain, which needs a longer-burning lamp than I can currently obtain.

I have assumed that the reader has a copy of the Rosicrucian texts to hand: continuous reference to the texts would have rendered this essay too long and, for this reason, where matter diverges into promising, though perhaps lengthy, detours, it has been relegated to the endnotes.

‘This Vault we parted in three parts,’ writes the anonymous author of the *Fama*, and I have followed his lead in this matter. Walls, floor and ceiling are all present, though the builder’s materials in question may look little like bricks and mortar to the entered apprentice. The past master will, however, realize that the House of the Holy Spirit is built of dreams, symbols and aspirations.

## 1. The Hidden Stone

*Visita Interiora Terrae, Rectificando, Inveniens Occultum Lapidem.*

(Visit the interior parts of the earth: by rectification thou shalt find the Hidden Stone) — *Basil Valentinus*.

The whole world's happiness is based upon the discovery of the Hidden Stone and its rectification. It is known that it dwells in darkness, yet it gives forth light. Do we know what it really is? Like the Grail, the Hidden or Philosopher's Stone remains obscure in its origins. But, as the Grail quest is not confined to Arthurian knights, neither is the search for the Hidden Stone confined merely to alchemists. Both quests are paradigms of the Great Work; both are analogous to *the* Great Work undertaken by Christ in the Holy Sepulchre — the mystery of which we will discuss later.

How do the Hidden Stone and the mystery of the Resurrection relate to the Vault of C.R.? A full exegesis of this question must be arrived at by as winding a route as any which tracks the Holy Mountain of the Rosicrucian adept. Many points can only be touched upon, and some themes must be either anticipated or suspended before the full answer lies before us. It may help if we make some parallel examples from Christian, Grail and Rosicrucian sources. (See the table 'Some analogies in the life of the Hero-Initiate'.)

*Some analogies in the life of the Hero-Initiate*

TEXTUAL SOURCE:	CHRISTIAN	GRAIL CORPUS	ROSICRUCIAN
Representative figure:	Christ	Perceval/ Galahad	Christian Rosenkreutz
Hidden Stone motif:	Stone which was rejected	Stone which fell from heaven	Philosopher's Stone
Place of Confinement:	Sepulchre	Bed on Solomon's Ship	Vault
Method of Resurrection:	Bodily	Transfigured in Sarras	A body of knowledge is recovered
What is redeemed:	Creation	The Wasteland	Those in ignorance
Mode of being after Resurrection:	Saviour	Grail King/ Guardian	Inner Master

The course of the hero-initiate, be it Christ, Perceval or C.R., begins in obscurity, proceeds in the face of Promethean torments and difficulties, is subject to accusations of foolishness, and ends in a death which is only death to the world. At this point the course of the hero-initiate departs

totally from the expected pattern. He flies 'out of the sorrowful, weary wheel [and] pursues with eager feet to the circle desired.'<sup>2</sup> Turning from the pattern of his own life, he stands ready to guide the pattern of others. The tomb of his life's ending is really the cradle of his life's beginning. What happens at the turning-point must be explored later.

Christ enters the tomb and is resurrected; Galahad goes aboard the Ship of Solomon<sup>3</sup> and is transfigured in Sarras, the heavenly city; C.R. enters the Vault and a body of incorrupt teaching is discovered after 120 years. These analogies need not be strained after; they can be seen as variants of the Holy Fool legend which draw from a Christian model — itself based upon earlier mythological paradigms.

The whole world is changed at the moment of Resurrection as the involutory arc becomes an evolutionary way of return.<sup>4</sup> The Vault, like the famous House of the Holy Spirit, is not fixed in one location. Just as the Ship of Solomon is really the Barque of Faith which transports the wood of Eden's Tree in the shape of a canopied bed that it might become the Tree of Golgotha in a later time, so the Vault is a treasury from which later ages can draw. The astonishing impulse behind the defence of Jerusalem during the Crusades was the desire to protect the Holy Sepulchre: 'He is not here. He is risen.' The importance is not the empty tomb but the One who occupied it so briefly, his teaching and his Resurrection. These are timeless tabernacles which we must explore if we wish to see our own likeness to the hero-initiate. Our imaginations can recreate their reality as initiatory chambers, but we will have to follow the pattern of the Holy Fool.

The Vault may be timelessly present within our imaginations, yet we cannot remove the brass plate without first preparing ourselves. Even as the original discoverers of the Vault kept their curiosity in check, sleeping and consulting their Lullian Rota first, so the women at the Sepulchre returned home to keep the Sabbath before returning to open the tomb and anoint the body of their Lord. What miraculous resurrections occur in this quiet time of preparation?

We step into the microcosm of the Vault. What is this sun

which shines in the centre of the ceiling? Whence is its light? We are told: 'although the Sun never shines in this Vault, nevertheless it was enlightened with another sun, which had learned this from the sun.' Light of this kind can only be kindled by a prior light; yet at the centre of the earth there is no light. If this is the Midnight Sun which shines for the initiate in the sanctuary, how is it still shining for us, who are not adepts? It must have its source of kindling from a previous initiate who brings the greatest light of all.

The source of all light is the Creator who brings light out of darkness, though darkness cannot comprehend it. The Creator therefore manifests in order to bring a light which *can* be comprehended — even by the ignorant and simple.

I will bear witness

That tho this bairn was ybore, there blazed a star  
That all the wise of this world in o wit accorded —  
That such a bairn was ybore in Bethlehem the citee  
That man's soul should save and sin destroy.  
And all the elements . . . hereof bearen witness.  
That he was God that all wrought the wolke [heavens]  
first showed

Though that were in heaven token stella comata  
And tendered her as a torch to reverence his birth;  
*The light followed the Lord into the low earth.*<sup>5</sup>

The Star of Bethlehem is distilled as dew<sup>6</sup> in the Virgin's womb, humbly and insignificantly becoming manifest. Alchemically, Christ is the rose flowering on the cross of the elements in one last blaze of glory. Then the light is extinguished:

The sonne was clips and dark in every rem [realm]  
When Christ Jesu five welles list uncloze  
Towards Paradis called the rede strem [stream],  
Of whose five woundes print in your hert a rose.<sup>7</sup>

The descent of Christ's light into the dark places of the earth must here break off. We cannot look upon this light of the Vault any longer; it dazzles us, and we are unprepared to explore further.

It is Shere Thursday and Venus Day already.<sup>8</sup> The tomb is sealed; the King is laid to rest. Whether for three days or a hundred and twenty years, we must wait. 'Of the upper part [of the vault] you shall understand no more at this time.'<sup>9</sup>

## 2. A Porter in Hell

'I have descended into the bosom of the Mistress'

— *Orphic inscription*

So we return to the vault to view the body of our master, C.R. There is a sense of timeslip as we gaze within. We are but the latest successors who look through the doors of time into the Otherworld reality of the Inner dimension. As Seth is allowed three glimpses of Paradise when he goes back to the Garden to gain the Oil of Mercy for the dying Adam<sup>10</sup> and looks back into a world before the Fall; as the women look into the empty Sepulchre and wonder on Easter Morning, seeing time reversed and its laws upset; as Parzival gazes upon the aged Titurel who lies in the same room as the Grail within the Fisher King's Castle and sees his predecessor — so we look into the vault upon our master, C.R.

C.R. himself was famed for opening a certain door — that door of iron inscribed with copper writing which proclaims the resting place of the Lady Venus. The light within *her* vault is described as 'the most precious thing that Nature ever created'.<sup>11</sup> When he looks upon her naked form, C.R. looks through another door of time, back to the foundation mysteries of which the Goddess is mistress. Those who have the temerity to look through such doors bind themselves irrevocably to what lies beyond them. C.R., though he is 'a grain buried in the bosom of Jesus', is also a votary of Venus. How may this be reconciled?

We look upon his incorrupt body and mentally rehearse the two accounts that have traditionally come down to us. The grave and reverend character of the *Fama* seems to bear little resemblance to the C.R. of the *Chymical Wedding*. The *Fama* is the official history of C.R. compiled by serious aspirants who stress the solid achievements of their master and recount by what means he has laid up such a treasury



of knowledge. Here is recounted a parallel life to that of Christ — the respectful account, told in hushed tones. C.R. has a secret middle life in which he consults learned men (as Christ does in the Temple or, apocryphally, on his journey to Britain to learn of Druids or of Essene teachers). C.R. is acclaimed as one of the wise, he is 'the expected one' (Christ is recognized as Messiah). C.R. goes into Egypt and, like Lull before him, recognizes the kernel of wisdom at the heart of the non-Christian mysteries (Christ is 'called out of Egypt'). The Christly parallel belies any correspondence with the mysteries of the Goddess. Strikingly absent from the *Fama* is any 'Passion Narrative', wherein the earlier mystery resonances are always touched.

We need to turn from the official to the unofficial history of C.R. — the *Macgnimartha* (Youthful Exploits) or *Mabinogi*<sup>12</sup> of our hero in which his full mythos is clearly delineated. If the *Fama* is unhelpful, then the *Chymical Wedding* has all the clues we need to answer this riddle. The *Chymical Wedding* is a rosary — a mystical sequence of seven beads — in which C.R. gathers the roses of Venus' wealth. Each day is one petal in the seven-petalled rose which surrounds him — the rose which we have called the vault. In the middle of this rose is celebrated the hierogamy of C.R. and the Lady Venus for, despite the fact that the *Chymical Wedding of C.R.* is assumed to be about the wedding of the royal persons, the title is actually self-descriptive and accurate as it stands.

If we turn the pages which lead up to C.R.'s secret hierogamy we glimpse the real C.R. who, though his hair is grey and he accounts himself as no longer young, shares the same innocent earnestness as Perceval at the outset of the Grail Quest. Here is one who would sell all he had for the possession of the pearl of wisdom and who suffers the rigours of his initiation into wisdom with the greatest humility and determination. His approach is the ideal candidate's towards initiation, unaware that, though he has been invited to a Royal Wedding, *he himself is the groom*.<sup>13</sup>

C.R. suffers the lot of all men: he is thrust into incarnation, into the captivity of matter, where he is yoked to his fellows. This is clearly seen in Day One where he dreams that he emerges from his dungeon by the help of 'an ancient matron'.

He is wounded in such a manner that blood covers him from head to foot. He has indeed 'descended into the bosom of the Mistress', into the Taurobolium whence the initiate of Cybele's mysteries emerges 'washed in the blood of the bull'.<sup>14</sup> He is released from his dungeon and told by the ancient matron that he should be proud of his wounds and 'keep them for my sake'. The lamentation of the *Dies Sanguinem* is forsaken in favour of the *Hilaria*.<sup>15</sup>

C.R. arrays himself in his wedding-garments, with crossed red-bands over his chest and four red roses in his hat.

These roses proclaim his loyalty, for, though they may be symbolic of wounds, they are also the tokens of the Goddess. For all its Protestant veneer, the *Chymical Wedding* is an exposition of the Mysteries of Venus, which can be traced back to the goddesses of pagan Europe whose influence underlies this narrative drama.

We have opened the door of the Vault and, like the Golden Dawn initiate before us or C.R. who enters the fateful copper-inscribed door, we are committed to all that lies beyond. But whose door have we come through? That of the Lady Venus. She is our way in and also our way out of incarnation as we shall relate. Bewildered, we see that our Vault has within it the receding image of vault inside vault, like a nest of boxes. We must go further on and further in. We watch our master, C.R., uncover the Lady Venus and we begin to realize the consequences of his action. When the mysteries of the Goddess are discovered by the initiate-hero, all her treasures lie open to him; now he must guard her mysteries like the priest of Diana in the grove of Nemi.<sup>16</sup> He is sequestered to remain as porter in the Castle but, instead of engaging in combat with the previous porter, he merely succeeds to the role. Nor may he forgo his duties until another comes to take his place.<sup>17</sup> Since C.R. is no longer young he concludes that he will die in harness. Nowhere is it told how C.R. relinquished his service to the Lady Venus for here the account of the *Chymical Wedding* breaks off.

As we ponder on this unresolved mystery we see the Vault changing before our eyes. C.R. has been pricked by Cupid within Venus' vault; like a gallus of Cybele — the Asiatic Venus — he has descended into the subterranean chamber of Magna Mater, into the bosom of the Mistress. As

Persephone on earth is called *Kore* — Maiden — so her title in Hades is altered to *Despoina* — Mistress. He has proclaimed his allegiance in his heart and lies upon the nuptial pastos in the *cubiculum*, paying his tithe to hell or to the subterranean mother. The hierogamy of C.R. and the Lady Venus takes place but, for us, the veil descends in a rosy mist and we see patterned before us the symbolic wedding in another guise.

The strains of Wagner's overture to *Tannhauser* are heard, but even music is subject to variance and timewarp in the Vault, and it changes to the medieval ballad of the poet-knight Tannhauser and we hear the story unfolding yet another thread in the complex life of C.R.

Tannhauser lived in Venusberg with Lady Venus, enjoying the pleasures of her Otherworld. Yet, being a Christian knight, he was aware that his life was unblessed by his faith. Repenting, he journeyed to the Pope to gain absolution. 'It would be easier', said the Pope, 'for my staff to flower than that you could be forgiven.' Disconsolate, Tannhauser returned to Venusberg and his former mistress. Yet, no sooner had he left Rome than the papal staff burst into flower. The messengers despatched after him arrive too late to find Tannhauser entered into his unholy hill forever.<sup>18</sup>

The shards of this primal image are scattered throughout Germanic oral tradition from its appearance in the thirteenth century right up to the present with Thomas Mann's *Zauberberg* (*The Magic Mountain*). We realize that the Rosicrucian manifestos were written in awareness of the Tannhauser story which shares a common source with the Faery Otherworld of Celtic tradition.

The Venus of the Tannhauser legend is nearer in conception to Holda or Freia — the ancient goddess of the earth and underworld — than to the Classical Venus. Tannhauser feasts with his mistress as the wanderer into Faeryland feasts in the Happy Otherworld with Queen Mab, Morgan le Fay or the Queen of Faery. Tannhauser means 'forest-dweller' and may derive from Wotanhauser, the mountain where Freia and Wotan lived. We read in *Die Morin* by Herman von Sachsenheim (1453) how a hero travels to Faery and encounters Queen Venus and King (!) Tannhauser. Wotan has been replaced by this precursor of C.R. Just prior

to the publication of the Rosicrucian texts, Heinrich Kornmann collected together a series of legends about Venus entitled *Mons Veneris, Fraw Veneris Berg*, published in 1614. All the pagan elements are assembled ready to become the vehicle of the Rosicrucian impulse.

Thomas of Ercildoune and Thomas the Rhymer in Scottish Faery tradition both enter Faeryland to companion its queen; C.R. becomes the vassel of the Lady Venus. As he has lifted her veil, so he becomes her 'porter in hell' — not a Christian hell, but a pagan Underworld. He becomes custodian of the previous mysteries, for no new movement can go forward without initiation from the Wise Ones who have trodden the road before him. He marries the Lady Venus to learn of her wisdom, just as those Walkers-between-the-Worlds<sup>19</sup> enter Faery to be initiates of the Otherworldly wisdom.

This Happy Otherworld, the timeless realm, can be dimly discerned in the Vault. We must follow the footsteps of our master C.R. closely in order to see it. The sword-bridge or turning door which leads to the pagan Otherworld is ever present but has been obscured to later ages. C.R. is the bridge by which we can see into it; and only he can travel thither because he agrees to do his portering in hell for the love of the Lady Venus. There must always be porters willing to bear across the wisdom of past ages: the hero-initiates who harrow hell, who marry the Lady at the centre of life's maze, and are resurrected to fly out of the weary wheel only when another guardian/porter comes to take their place. C.R. has his example in Tannhauser — the medieval precursor whose pagan successors can be recognized in the Celtic tradition — but he also has the example of Christ whose substitution is on behalf, not just of the next guardian, but of all who come after.

C.R. lies incorrupt in the Vault which is tomb, womb and *cubiculum* — wedding chamber. Like Taliesin he remains for certain periods within the Spiral Castle of the Mother, and emerges having passed through all possible experiences, knowing all wisdom.<sup>20</sup> Thomas Vaughan's *Lumen de Lumine* (1651) shows such a personage in the underworld coils of an ouroboric dragon: he sits secure and safe, with his rosary culled from Venus' treasury. 'Non nisi parvulis' is written over him: Christ's dictum, 'Unless you become as a little child

## SCHOLÆ MAGICÆ TYPVS.



*Ro Vaughan sculp:*

Figure 1. The Rosicrucian Initiate from Thomas Vaughan's *Lumen de Lumine*.

you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.' (Matthew 18:3) We must each enter the necessity of the Mother and, being created, must endlessly give birth, wax, wane and die. (See Figure 1.)

The Otherworld melts away before our eyes, and we see before us the Vault of the Lady Venus through the eyes of C.R. He reads, 'When the fruit of my tree shall be quite melted down then I shall awake and be the mother of a king.' What does it mean? Will our master C.R. be reborn of this lady as Gwion was born as Taliesin from the womb of Ceridwen? This is a formula to discover the true nature of the Hidden Stone, but it cannot be worked out here. How can the body of C.R. be resurrected? The greatest mystery lies beyond: a story known to all, so open that its secrets are ignored, holds the answer.

### 3. A Dazzling Darkness

Our Lord is the fruit, our Lady is the tree:

Blessed be the blossom that sprang, Lady, of thee!

— Medieval anon (B. M. Harley 541, f.228b c.1475-1500)

We have looked into successions of receding vaults, back to the birth of time. Our sight is blurred, our faculties uncertain of apprehension, yet one factor stands prominently isolated in our understanding — the sacrifice which transforms that Vault into a wedding-chamber as well as a sepulchre.

We know that the fruit of Venus' tree is her son/lover who undergoes a mystical death/marriage: unless he dies, he cannot be born again. Unless he is resurrected, creation is unfree. The pagan resonance of this symbolic action is figured everywhere in the hero-initiate's sacrificial death to the earth's fertility. He is hung upon a tree, beaten and tortured; and he eventually lets fall his blood in fructifying drops to the ground: 'fair Balder falleth everywhere'.<sup>21</sup> It is only when his dead carcass is laid in the tomb of the earth, that the womb of Dame Kind or Nature can give birth.

This is the way of things. The fate of the human body is to become part of the great metabolic renewal of the earth's replacement: the putrefaction of the body reduces matter to its prime constituents, which then become available for

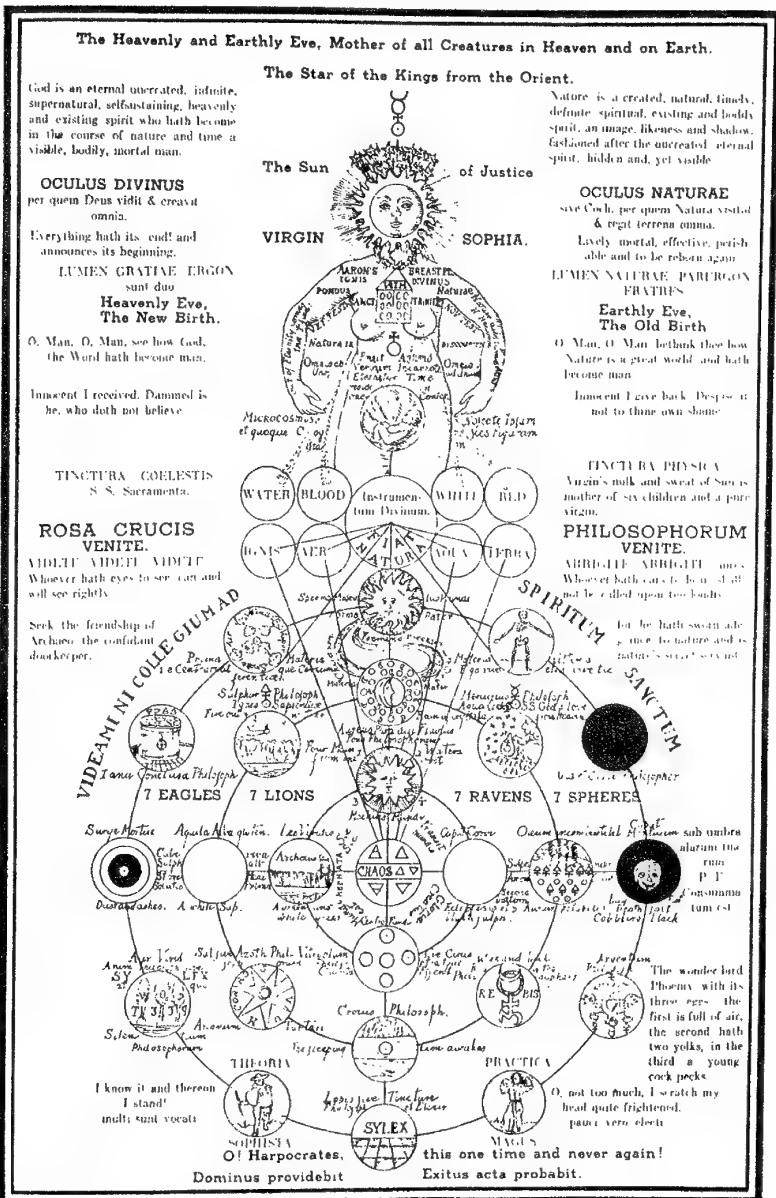


Figure 2. Dame Kind or Sophia as the *Soror Mystica* of God's Alchemical Work — from the Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians, 1788.

the growth of new life. In this work, Dame Kind is the *Soror Mystica* of God, without whom the alchemical work of creation could not take place. (See Figure 2.)

Christ's death follows this model closely, fulfilling the ancient patterns of ritual death. Yet there is a unique difference. While the sacrificial deaths and descents of Persephone, Attis or Orpheus perfectly match the archaic obligation, their persons remain subject to the laws of nature: their sphere of influence is felt primarily in the Otherworldly rather than the human reality. Christ breaks the circuit of the weary wheel by returning from death *in his own body* which, though glorified, is still a *human* body. This is out of accordance with the laws of Dame Kind. Even immortals must render her dues, going through the sorrows of incarnation, if they are foolish enough to take a human body. Dame Kind, the Mother, Lady Venus or Sophia — whatever we choose to call her — is bountiful and generous, yet she lives within her own fixed laws and these cannot be broken. Yet the Resurrection of Christ breaks them. How?

We left Christ hanging on the cross of the elements at the end of the first section of this essay. What occurs at the point of death, in the holy hiatus of Friday night through to Sunday morning, is the point under investigation. This central event is the meeting of many power lines: whatever their provenance before this event in time, whatever their divergence after it — all the lines lead through the mystery of the Resurrection.

It is not by accident that the crucifixion is accomplished upon Venus Day — Friday.

*Et hoc in alta voce  
omnia elementa  
audierunt, et ante  
thronum Dei dixerunt:  
Wach! rubicundus  
sanguis innocentis agni  
in desponsatione sua  
effusus est.*<sup>22</sup>

(Then did all the Elements  
hear the great cry, and  
before the Throne of God,  
they said:  
O! the red flowing blood of  
the innocent lamb is shed  
on the wedding day.)

The Creed states that Christ, 'suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the



third day he rose again from the dead.' As a summation of the principle seed-symbols of Christian doctrine it is an excellent *précis*; yet there are those who worry that textual references to the credal statements are thin on the ground or completely absent from the Bible, ignorant that many of the so-called Apocryphal Narratives were once canonical to the Christian New Testament. The expunging of these narratives from the canonical collations has left curious lacunae which can, nevertheless, be filled from oral Christian tradition and from both Apocryphal Gospels and Gnostic texts. We have only to look at the medieval mystery plays to see that the life of the Saviour (particularly his birth and death) is only slightly more emphasized than the intriguing narratives of Creation and the Harrowing of Hell. Medieval laypeople stood a better chance of understanding the mystical subtext of the creed than do laypeople today.

We have considered the pagan motif of C.R.'s sojourn in the service of Lady Venus in some depth. The hierogamy of C.R. and the Lady Venus joined the Rosicrucian impulse directly to the roots of the mystery tradition: the Goddess is mistress of the foundation mysteries. In order for these mysteries to be made manifest, the Lady Venus must become 'the mother of a king'. But even as the Rosicrucian mysteries were to be transmitted by these means, so too were the Christian mysteries. It is time to replace the 'x' value of C.R. with the real value of x — Christ, whose mysteries are established on the foundations of the Goddess's.

Now let the Vault assume its last and most awesome appearance as we listen to the Hidden Gospel which speaks of the Creation of the World and its Way of Return.<sup>23</sup>

In the beginning was silence. And in the silence was God. God's helpmeet was Sophia, his wisdom. She fell from the fullness of the Pleroma and caused the creation of the world, becoming its guardian — the World Soul or manifest Sophia. In her distress she lifted up her voice and cried aloud, saying, 'My Father, my Father!

Why didst Thou create me? My god 'El, 'El,  
Why hast thou set me far away, cut me off,

Left me in the depths of the earth  
 And in the nether gloom of darkness  
 So that I have no strength to rise up thither?'<sup>24</sup>

She had become Sophia Nigrans, the guardian of the laws of creation: the door through whom all living things must pass.

The incarnation of Christ is through the body of Lady Mary. The Star of Bethlehem sheds its divine dew into her womb, which is the vessel of his becoming. His purpose in taking flesh is to break the incarnatory round of matter — not to destroy it, but to redeem it, giving it the opportunity of taking the way of evolutionary return. He reverses the involutionary path of Sophia Nigrans' fall. So that where it is written<sup>25</sup> 'Pray in the place where there is no woman. Destroy the works of femaleness, not because she is another . . . [?] but so that [her works] might cease from you,' the destruction of womankind or of Sophia's value is *not* meant to be understood — rather the reversal of involution into evolution is intended. Christ has to undergo the torments of death in order to meet with Sophia Nigrans, the ancient Mother of creation; and as her dowry, to offer her the way of return.

At the crucifixion, Christ as the emblem of Compassion, offers up his own flesh for the sake of all living flesh. He is laid in the tomb, entering the dark realm of Sophia Nigrans, who is guardian of the densest kernel of creative matter at the centre of the earth. He embraces her outcast darkness, as the hero-initiate embraces the Hag; and it is in their embrace that the spark of Resurrection is enkindled. The Star of Bethlehem blazes in the dark places of the earth. The burst of vivifying light is so strong that the shroud of Christ is forever imprinted with his image; likewise his image is imprinted upon the face of Sophia Nigrans who turns her dark face to that of her divine original — Sophia Stellarum — the bride of God and of the Stars.

Carbon liquifies into light — coal into diamond.

The philosophers have told us that 'the Stone is a black, vile, and fetid stone, and it is called the origin of the world and it springs up like germinating things.'<sup>26</sup> Also that, 'this stone proceeds from a sublime and most glorious place of

great terror which has given over many sages to death.’<sup>27</sup> Yet Christ dies not, nor is the Stone ‘black, vile and fetid’. It is become a ‘true Crystalline Rock — a bright virgin earth without spot or darkness.’<sup>28</sup> The Philosopher’s Stone is none other than the regenerate Sophia, now suffused and imprinted with the very potentia of all creation to return to its source.

The stone of the Sepulchre is rolled away; creation proceeds backwards at the turning point of Resurrection. And in the morning, very early, the great Epiphany of the Resurrected One takes place. Christ returns from the Underworld tomb — which is both womb and wedding chamber now — to show himself wearing the livery of Sophia Nigrans — his wounds. And she who is the Sophianic mediator upon earth, Mary Magdalene, is told, ‘Do not cling to me, for I am not yet ascended to the Father.’ Since the Resurrection, time is on the arc of evolutionary return. The next Sophianic embrace cannot now take place until Sophia Nigrans returns to the Pleroma — and this cannot be until the last blade of grass returns before her. Only then can Sophia Stellarum resume her rightful place as the Bride of Christ in the fullness of the Pleroma.

Until the time comes when Sophia Nigrans and Sophia Stellarum cease to polarize as the manifest and transcendent aspects of God’s wisdom, the Lady Mary, Christ’s Mother, sits in the place prepared for her: Mary Magdalene remains in the place of Sophianic mediator until the final apocatastases occurs.<sup>29</sup>

The subtextual gospel offered above must stand for the entire corpus of hero-initiates. Its application to the Rosicrucian Vault is universal — ‘a microcosm corresponding in all motions to the Macrocosm’, as well as ‘a compendium of things past, present and to come’. The Vault is the place of incarnatory struggle, of ritual initiatic death and the place where the true nuptials of matter and spirit are enacted.

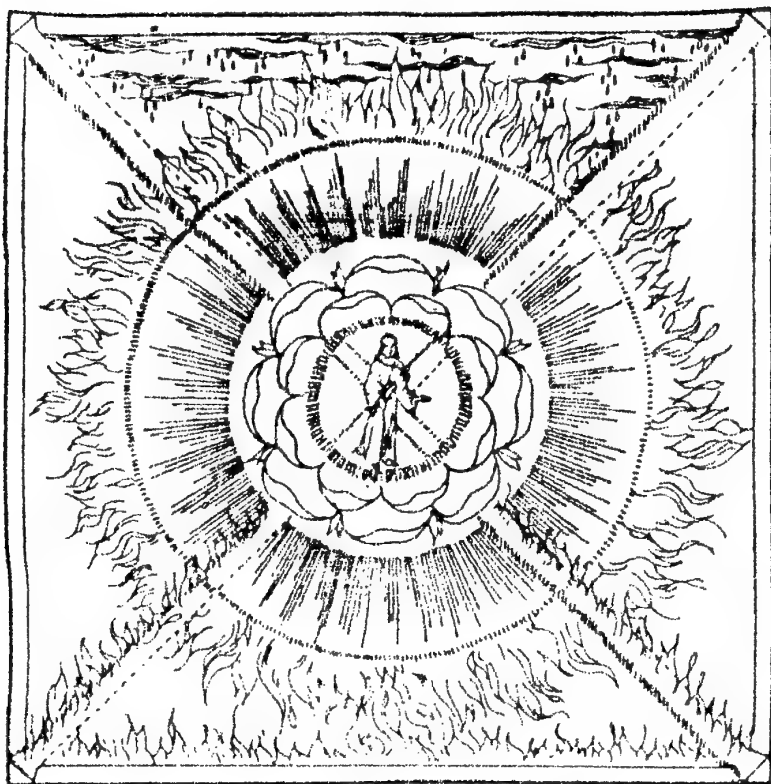
Because we have spoken here of many Just Ones — of Christ, Perceval and C.R. — we ourselves are not absolved from similar struggle, initiation or embrace. The place within the deeps of the earth, be it the realm of Sophia Nigrans, the Underworld Paradise of Venusberg, or the Rosicrucian Vault, exists in no single time. Bodily

resurrection is not required of us, but the creative regeneration of the mysteries is. C.R., human and mortal like us, made his compendium of wisdom for all who came after him: he becomes a Just One — not after the manner of Christ, whose life he closely imitates, but after the manner of a prophetic light-bearer. Vaughan speaks of his body as 'being surrounded by sparkling flames which issued from his body. . . . Such Elijahs also are the members of this Fraternity who . . . walk in the supernatural light.'<sup>30</sup> We too are potential light-bearers, though subject to the laws of Dame Kind. While the great initiates vanish from the earth to work in higher realms of influence, we must be potentiators of the light within our own element. Says Vaughan, 'This is the Steward of Wisdom: let him be clerk who can.'<sup>31</sup>

What receptacle of wisdom will each of us leave behind us? The hidden treasures of our own traditions lie within vaults of our own making — they are accessible, if we take the trouble to search for them. The humility and fortitude necessary to plumb the secrets of the mysteries which precede our own time are not easily granted nor gratuitously maintained. Too often the doors of the mysteries are forced open by arrant explorers and treasure-hunters to reveal a sterile tomb. The joint duty of light-bearer and pontifex is upon us, as upon C.R. The very obscurity of this task dissuades many from attempting to open 'a door to Europe'.

Not an earthly Jerusalem, a manifest mystery school with a rigid hierarchy, but a scattering of *Fidele d'amore* who pursue a solitary way within the Inner Realms is required: those who are willing to mount the cross of the elements and to learn from the sources of the Ancient Wisdom in order to enter the furthest circle of the heavenly rose. (See Figure 3.)

The Rosicrucian manifestos state plainly their function is to draw together men and women of goodwill into a common bond where details and differences are set aside: in this, Rosicrucianism proclaims itself a mystery school. The mystery narratives of C.R. are shown to be transmitters of the Ancient Wisdom, for which the Vault itself is a symbolic paradigm. Yet, in our own time, these emblematic mysteries



*Figure 3. The Initiate of the Mystery Vault — from the Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians, 1788.*

have been constrained into manifest 'schools of Rosicrucian wisdom' and the true Rosicrucian impulse is not free to flow. The true Rosicrucian remains invisible, except in his or her effect.

Only those who go down into the sepulchre of the Vault may aspire to build the Temple of Wisdom. Only those who make the sacrifice of the unreserved dedication may enter the seven-pillared house where Wisdom has spread her table and mixed her wine. Only those who die to themselves may sit down to eat with her at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. (See Figure 4.)

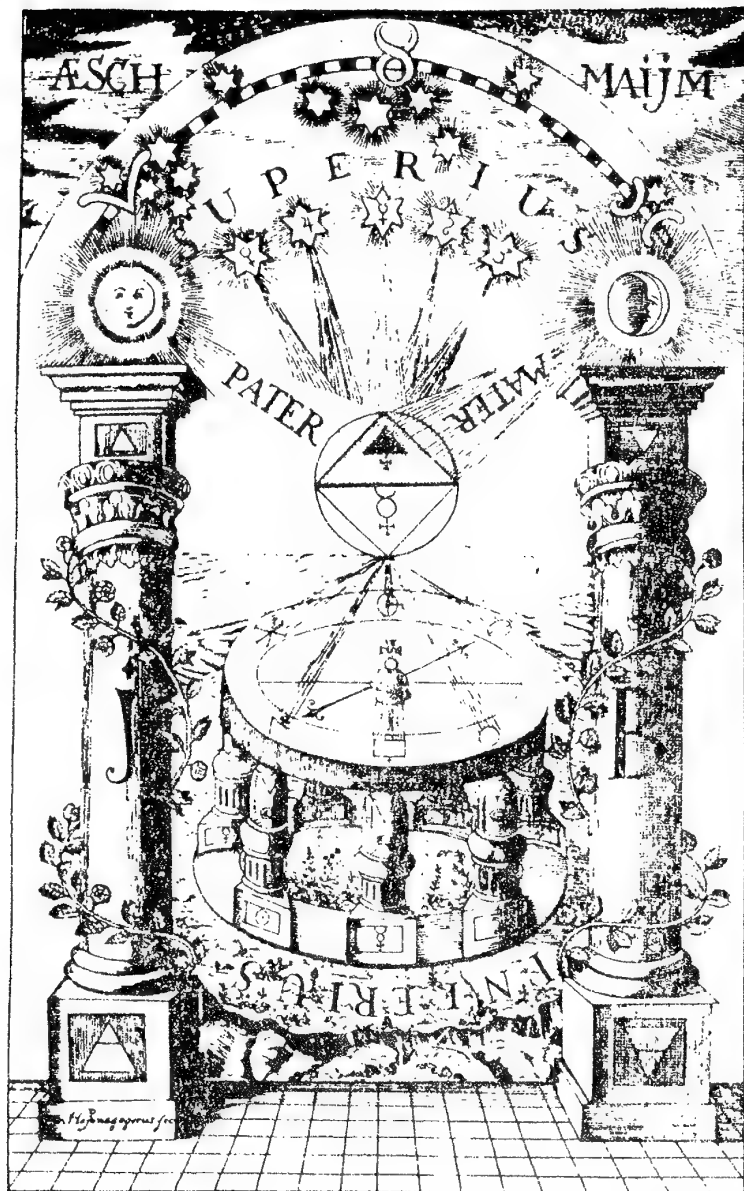


Figure 4. The Temple of Pansophia — from the Compass of the Wise, Berlin, 1779 'Our Rota takes her beginning from that day when God spake Fiat, and shall end when he shall speak Pereat.' (Fama)



## Appendix 3

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# **Additional Verses from Oral Tradition**

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### THE LAILLY WORM

*Scottish ballad*

When that I was but seven years old  
My mother she did die,  
My father he married the worst woman  
That ever your eyes did see.

My father he married the worst woman  
That ever your eyes did see,  
And she was a witch of the vilest of kind  
And a lady of high degree.

She turned me into the Lailly Worm  
To coil all around the Tree,  
And she turned my sister sweet Maisry  
Into the Mackrel of the sea.

Every night at evening time  
The Mackrel comes to me,  
She combs of my hair with a long silver comb  
And washes it in the sea.

And seven brave knights I have slain here  
All underneath of the Tree,  
If and that you were my own father dear  
The eighth one you should be!



So his father he sent for this lady so gay  
All unto her he did say  
'What have you done with my young son  
And his sister Maisry?'

'Your son he has gone all to the king's court,  
Earning his meat and his fee,  
Your daughter has gone all to the queen's court,  
A lady for to be.'

'You lie and you lie you ill woman  
So loud I hear you lie,  
For you turned my son to the Lailly Worm  
To coil around the Tree,  
And you turned his sister sweet Maisry into  
The Mackrel of the sea.'

So this lady has taken a wee silver wand  
And stroked it three time three,  
Up and arose then the finest young knight  
That ever a son could be.

And this lady has taken a wee silver horn  
And blown on it three times three,  
All of the fishes they came unto her  
But the Mackrel of the sea.

All of the fishes they came unto her  
But the mackrel of the sea, saying,  
'You shaped me once in an unseemly shape,  
And you never more will shape me!'

So the lord he has sent all to the greenwood,  
For whinnies and for the hawthorn,  
And there he has taken his lady so gay,  
And there he did her burn.

## FAIR ROSAMUND

*Traditional ballad from the USA*

'I have a sister' Young Clifford said,  
'A sister no man knows,  
She hath a colour in her cheeks  
Like a drop of blood in snows.'

'She hath a waist, a slender waist,  
As slim as my silver cane,  
I would not for ten thousand worlds  
King Henry knew her name.'

King Henry was in his bower,  
He hid so close and still,  
And every word Young Clifford said,  
He wrote down in a bill.

The first fair line she looked upon,  
She did begin to smile,  
The second fair line she looked upon,  
Her tears began to fall.

'Oh cursed be my brother Clifford,  
Oh cursed may he be,  
Why couldn't he dote on his horse and hounds,  
Why must he dote on me?

Go fetch for me my planet book  
That's in my secret room,  
Go fetch for me my planet book  
That I might read my doom.'

Her planet book it was brought down  
And laid upon her knee,  
It said the time was come to pass  
When poisoned she must be.

'Go fetch for me my waiting maid,  
To come and dress my hair,  
And summon for me my serving groom  
To saddle my grey mare.'

With four-and-twenty noble lords  
She rode up to the King,  
And when they came to London Gates  
How bright the bells did ring.

'Oh cursed be my brother Clifford  
And cursed may he be,  
Why couldn't he dote on his hawks and hounds  
Why must he dote on me?'

## THE INVOCATION OF THE GRACES

*Traditional invocation widespread in the Highlands  
and Islands of Scotland.*

I bathe thy palms in showers of wine,  
In the lustral fire, in the seven elements,  
In the juice of rasps, in the milk of honey:  
And I place the nine pure choice graces  
In the fair fond face:  
The grace of form, the grace of voice,  
The grace of fortune, the grace of goodness,  
The grace of wisdom, the grace of charity,  
The grace of choice maidenliness,  
The grace of whole-souled loveliness,  
The grace of goodly speech.

Dark is yonder town, dark are those therein,  
Thou art the white swan, going in among them,  
Their hearts are under thy control  
Their tongues are beneath thy sole,  
Nor will they ever utter word to give thee offence.

Thine is the skill of the fairy woman  
Thine is the virtue of bride the calm,  
Thine is the grace of Mary the mild,  
Thine is the tact of the woman of Greece,  
Thine is the beauty of Emir the lovely,  
Thine is the tenderness of Darthula delightful,  
Thine is the courage of Maebh the strong,  
Thine is the charm of Binne-Bheul.

Thou art the door of the chief of hospitality,  
Thou art the surpassing star of guidance  
Thou art the step of the deer upon the hill,  
Thou art the step of the steed upon the plain  
Thou art the grace of the swan swimming,  
Thou art the loveliness of all lovely desires.

Peter has come and Paul has come  
James has come and John has come,  
Muriel and Mary Virgin have come,

Uriel the all-beneficient has come,  
Ariel the beauteousness of the young has come,  
Gabriel the seer of the virgin has come  
Raphael the prince of the valiant has come  
Michael the chief of the hosts has come;  
The spirit of true guidance has come,  
And the king of kings has come upon the helm,  
All to bestow on thee their affection and their love.

## INVOCATION FOR JUSTICE

*Traditional to the Scottish Highlands*

Go at Dawn to a place where three streams meet. When the Sun rises to the very top of the Hills, cup your hands and fill them with water from the point where the streams meet. Dip your face into your hands full of the water, and repeat the invocation:

I will wash my face in the nine rays of the sun  
As Mary washed her child in the rich fermented  
milk.

Black is yonder town, black are those within,  
I am the white swan, queen above them all.

I will travel in the name of God,  
In likeness of deer,  
In likeness of horse,  
In likeness of serpent,  
In likeness of king:  
Stronger will it be with me  
Than with all persons.

## THE AUGURY OF MARY

This traditional augury from the Highlands of Scotland is said to have been employed by Mary to seek out the young Jesus when he was missing; he was in the Temple.

God over me  
God before me  
God behind me,  
I on thy path oh God,  
Thou oh God  
In my steps.

The augury made of Mary to her son  
The offering made of bride through her palm.  
Sawest thou it, o king of life?  
Said the king of life that he saw.

Son of beauteous Mary  
King of life,  
Give thou me eyes to see all my quest  
With grace that shall never fail  
Before me,  
That shall never quench or dim.

The augury made by Mary for her own offspring  
When he was for a space missing . . .  
Knowledge of truth,  
Not knowledge of falsehood,  
That I shall truly see all my quest.

Son of beauteous Mary  
King of life,  
Give thou my eyes to see all my quest  
With grace that shall never fail, before me,  
That shall never quench or dim.

# **DISCOGRAPHY**

Unlike literary sources, there are no 'great' or 'definitive' works on disc that truly define magical ballads from oral tradition. The reasons for this situation have been discussed throughout our main text. Many excellent performances have been recorded, however, both from genuine traditional singers and by professional artists intimately involved with traditional song. A short selection would be as follows:

**Child Ballads 1 and 2, Topic 12T160/1.**

**Cecilia Costello** (from BBC sound archives) **Leader Ler 4054** (includes 'The Cruel Mother' and an introduction by Mrs Costello)

**Paddy Tunney, Folk Legacy Records (USA) FSE-7** (Irish traditional songs and ballads by a master singer)

**Jean Ritchie, Folkways Records FA 2302** (includes 'The Wife of Ushers Well') American ballad singer.

**Bob Stewart, Broadside BRO 131** (includes 'Lord Bateman') Re-interpretation by the author.

Many superb recordings from tradition are found in the BBC archives, while masterly re-enactments of ballads have been recorded by Ewan MacColl on a number of LP records on the Topic and Blackthorn labels.



# Notes

Bibliographical information is included within the various references and general notes. Many of the reference works cited include very comprehensive bibliographies, and these should be consulted for in-depth research or academic cross reference to standard arts and sciences. There is no suggestion that the works referred to in my notes are in agreement with the theories put forward in the main text; they act as jumping-off points for further study in related fields.

## **Introduction**

1. In a few examples in folklore, traditions are revived and then readopted by the community that originally lost them. In 1969 I rewrote a ceremony called 'The Hunting of the Earl of Rone' for a stage performance in Barnstaple, North Devon, by a local troupe. This was adapted from accounts of a death and resurrection ritual, involving a Hobby Horse, which had been current in Combe Martin on the North Devon coast. Generically this belongs to a family of folk rituals found along the northern coasts of Devon and Cornwall, of which the famous Padstow Hoss is the best known representative. Through the efforts of revival folklorists, this ceremony has now been restored to Combe Martin, where the local people conduct it annually with great enthusiasm. The intellectual



origin of the Combe Martin Revels is now lost in the resurgence of local tradition, tapping into the older level of communal participation which created the material in the first instance. In only fifteen years, my role as originator of the revival and creator of the restored pattern of events is virtually unknown, other than to a few members of that first stage troupe, and through my own script and research notes, which I still have on file. Genuine traditions, therefore, are sometimes restimulated by deliberate attention; but they are only maintained by communal acceptance, and can survive only when this acceptance replaces individual creation or re-creation. In the course of such acceptance, the shape changes, but the spirit of the material remains constant.

2. The prime example of this arid intellectual approach to esoteric subjects is the nineteenth-century Theosophical Society. This powerful movement influenced the work of the popularized magical orders such as the Golden Dawn and various derivatives, and acted as the spearhead of the pseudo-Eastern attack upon orthodox Christianity and, paradoxically, upon genuine Western esotericism.

3. One of the most interesting parallels in Eastern mysticism may be found in *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, by Lama Anagarika Govinda (Rider, 1960). It seems significant that although Govinda is a Western individual approaching the East, his obvious commitment and deep understanding arise through total absorption into an active tradition of inner development; he worked through this tradition for over twenty years in Tibet.

### **Chapter One: The Hidden Tradition**

1. 'Back of our text is a culture thousands of years old, one which has built organically upon primitive instincts and which, therefore, knows nothing of the arbitrary morality violating the instincts characteristic of us as recently civilized Teutonic barbarians' [referring to ancient Chinese text].

'Only a little more than a thousand years ago we stumbled from the crudest beginnings of polytheism into the midst of a highly developed Oriental religion [i.e. Christianity] which lifted the imaginative minds of half-savages to a height that did not correspond to their degree of spiritual

development.' — C.G. Jung, Commentary upon *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, Jung and Wilhem, 1962 edition.

This fascinating commentary reveals Jung's deep knowledge of the classical Western source material, including a firm definition of the term 'Gnostic archoi', yet historically and culturally inaccurate statements such as the above are proposed as essential arguments for his case. This ambivalence runs through Jung's use of ancient psychological models, for they are employed with great freedom upon an intellectual ground in which the culture and philosophy which originated them is denied existence! Nor can we assume that Jung was suggesting that his theories applied only to Germanic people, as this would heap insult upon injury. Either Jung was totally unaware of the vast cultural heritage of the West during his writing of this invaluable commentary, as is continually stated and implied, or he is having an intellectual joke at the expense of the innocent reader who truly may not know better.

2. Practical methods of entering and creating Innerworlds are found in many of the books referred to in these Notes. In orthodox Christian practice, the technique is known as the Composition of Place, while in magical practice it has become known as Creative Visualization. Both terms describe the same technique of re-attuning consciousness in meditation. A third definition, that of 'astral travelling', is merely a restatement of the traditional shamanistic flight, in which Innerworlds are encountered during a trance or drug-induced experience.

3. Descriptions range from the Fairy UnderWorld of Gerald of Wales (*The Journey through Wales*, Book One, Ch.8) and similar journeys from oral tradition, to the Vision of Ezekiel. While the Welsh tale quoted by Gerald is an Otherworld or Innerworld account, the Biblical example derives from the effect of prophetic vision upon perception of 'reality'. In this sense the vision of Ezekiel, or the final vision of Merlin (*Prophecies of Merlin*, Geoffrey of Monmouth) do not represent Innerworlds which may be visited, but reveal inner vision transforming apprehension of all possible worlds.

Davidson, H.R.E. (ed.), *The Journey to the Other World*, Folklore Society.

Kirk, R. (ed. Stewart Sanderson), *The Secret Commonwealth*, Folklore Society.

4. In oral tradition this image is found in the ballad 'Giles Collins', in which the central character meets a maiden 'washing a marble stone' who prophesies his death if he approaches her.

Rees, A. and B, *Celtic Heritage*, London, 1961.

Ross, A., *Pagan Celtic Britain*, London, 1974.

Stewart, B., *Where is Saint George?* Bradford-on-Avon, 1976.

Stewart, B., *The Waters of the Gap*, Bath, 1980.

## **Chapter Two: The Secret Way Across The Abyss**

1. Several magical ballads and other songs were recorded from the repertoire of Mrs Costello, an elderly lady of Irish origin, but brought up in modern Birmingham, and speaking and singing with a broad Birmingham accent. In her introduction to the ancient ballad 'The Cruel Mother', she used to preface the song with a moral warning, repeating the words of her father. Yet the song itself, included in our song examples in Part Two, involves ritual murder, transmigration, and resurrection, with prophetic utterances and magical penances.

Ancient sites are often accorded a quite modern but undeniably traditional description by local people. I was advised, for example, that Thundersley in Essex acquired its name 'because it is the only hill in the area, and it attracts all the thunderstorms for miles around'. On visiting this famous site for the first time, I discovered that it included a venerable church, set upon the pagan foundations of a temple of Thor; that thunder-stones were still sited on the hilltop, and many nails driven into the trees for superstitious purposes. Oak from Thundersley Church was built into the ships that sailed against the invading Armada of Spain, and was later returned to the church. Relics of the English royal line are also found in connection with this site. The modern folklore description, quite ridiculous from a factual point of view, had encapsulated the pagan power of the place in one brief expression of a commonplace belief.

2. See detailed section on Thomas in Part Two.

3. In addition to several literary references to Rosamund, a ballad has survived in oral tradition in parts of the USA.

In both the ballad and in historical accounts of this relationship, Rosamund, the mistress of Henry II, takes on a magical role. She is the innocent victim, bowing to deeper powers (in the ballad), while in literary sources she was the myth-woman, lover of the king, kept hidden in a maze.

4. See detailed section on Tam Lin in Part Two.

Wimberley, L.C., *Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads*, New York, 1959.

5. Campbell, J.G., *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, Glasgow, 1902.

6. The best-known example is that of the benzine 'ring' which was revealed during a dream of a serpent biting its own tail. In this context we have a good example of a magical symbol, the Serpent, operating to stimulate scientific realization. In modern psychology, of course, this viewpoint would not be acceptable. The great composer Stravinsky, who represented many potent Innerworld themes in his work, claimed that certain pieces of music were revealed to him by dreams. One of the best comments upon dreams is that of Gerald of Wales, writing in the twelfth century, a comment which has not yet been improved upon: 'It seems to me that dreams are like rumours; you must use your common sense, and then accept some and refuse to believe others.' *The Journey through Wales*, Book II, Chapter 2.

7. MacCana, P., *Celtic Mythology*, London, 1975.

8. Once has he kissed Lady Margaret's yellow hair,  
Twice has he kissed her on the cheek  
And three times he kissed her red ruby lips,  
And he fell into her arms asleep.

For the physical nature of the otherworld being, see Wimberley, *op. cit.*

9. Guest, Lady Charlotte (trans.), *The Mabinogion*, London, 1902.

Gantz, G. (trans), *The Mabinogion*, London, 1976

10. Graves, R., *The Greek Myths*, London.

Rieu, E.V., *The Odyssey/The Iliad*, London.

11. This frail background is only too apparent in the frantic and unfounded claim of orders such as the 'Druids' to supposed antiquity. The well-publicized legal actions undertaken by members of the Golden Dawn, in dispute of authority over the Order, reveal the weakness of the

personalities concerned, and their total lack of contact with an enduring esoteric tradition.

12. Unscrupulous journalists have done a lot of damage to 'witchcraft' since the freedom of the 1950s, when public claims were first exploited by the press. Despite the sensational nonsense written in both modern texts and scandalous 'exclusives' there are a small number of dedicated people who quietly maintain and develop a simple contact with basic nature lore. Work of this sort is far removed from the general modern, or medieval, notion of witchcraft as the worship of diabolical powers or employment of obscene ritual activities.

13. Stewart, B., *Where is Saint George?* Bradford-on-Avon, 1976, page 61.

Green, M., *A Harvest of Festivals*, London, 1980.

14. Matthews, J. (ed.), *At The Table of the Grail*, London, 1984.

15. Knight, G., *The Secret Tradition in Arthurian Legend*, Wellingborough, 1984.

16. Collected by Alfred Williams, in the Wiltshire/Berkshire region.

17. The most efficiently researched publications on this material are found in the list of the Covenant Publishing Company, and although I do not agree with the religious and political aspirations represented, the source material and references in the two following works are valuable: Dobson, Revd C.C., *Did Our Lord Visit Britain?* London, 1936 and 1974.

Elder, Isabel Hill, *Celt, Druid and Culdee*, London, 1973.

18. A very interesting analysis is offered in:

Grant, M., *History of Rome*, London, 1978, pages 258-69.

19. The cycle of mediation is well represented in the theosophical works of Boehme, Fludd or Kircher. Excellent summaries of the imagery of Fludd and Kircher are to be found in: Godwin, J., *Robert Fludd and Athanasius Kircher*, London, 1979. A lot of confusion has arisen in modern occult or esoteric works by the strange attempts at squaring magical philosophical systems with evolutionary theory. If we examine the magical and metaphysical texts, such as those mentioned above, or the alchemical and earlier transformational legends of the middle ages, we find no

overall evolutionary theme. Nor is it present in native lore, such as the British or Irish legends, nor in classical sources. Evolution is a materialist theory based upon linear progression; metaphysics postulates a devolution based upon increasingly fragmented reflections of primary images.

### **Chapter Three: Understanding the Initiation**

1. This magical law has been restated by Jung (*Secret of the Golden Flower*) who 'discovered' that the most powerful problems cannot be solved, but are outgrown.

2. Mann, A.T., *The Round Art*, England, 1979, Part VII, page 165.

Mayo, J., *Astrology*, London, 1979, Chapter 10.

3. This is expressed biblically by the tradition of Enoch, who walked with God and was not, or Elijah who was taken up to heaven in a Whirlwind. Such traditions exist worldwide; a seer or magically charged person disappears while still in the physical body. This is very different from an Inner or imaginative journey, and is central to the British transformational magic. Merlin, Thomas Rhymer, the Reverend Robert Kirk, Michael Scot — all are said to have physically disappeared into another world. The last three are historical persons, physical expressions of the Merlin centrality. Kings and Heroes, on the other hand, are physically translated after near death or wounding, assisted by otherworld powers, to be taken hence for regeneration. Once again, the esoteric Christians can claim that the Resurrection includes all stages of this magical system, for the regenerated physical body of Jesus ascended to heaven.

4. Coleman, J.C., *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*, USA, 1964. A detailed survey of the field which is accessible for the general reader.

5. The inverse of this time-hallowed theory may be related to certain models of psychic imbalance, in which a 'mask' of insanity replaces the normal personality. R.D. Laing has dealt with this interpretation of mental illness at length; the basis of his theories is identical with that of the esoteric psychologies, in which the true entity is a central potency filtered through to the group-world by a series of masks which may be harmonious or destructive, yet leaving the central reality intact.

### Chapter Four: The Power of Giving

1. See for example the detailed descriptions offered by Rudolph Steiner in his various works, in which earlier states of existence are described through the faculty of intellectual interpretation of Seership. While Steiner's visions extend back to states of pre-material existence, other more immediate esoteric traditions teach of early civilizations and races of men, such as the well-publicized material on Atlantis.

The non-evolutionary world-view is not merely a matter of religious dogma; the Christian falsification of history is a corruption of ancient dream matrices that relate individual consciousness to collective historical cycles. In this sense individual confusion and separation from harmonious psychic and physical unity is identical to the collective ruin of Atlantis, and to the metaphysical Fall into Manifestation.

2. Caesar, *The Conquest of Gaul*: 'souls do not suffer death [according to the Druids], but after death pass from one to the other' (*ab aliis . . . transire ad alios*). Other classical sources, including Posidonius from whom Caesar derived much of his information, affirm this Druidic doctrine.

3. 'Math Son of Mathonway', *Mabinogion*.

4. The reassembly of the characteristics in successive lives is not part of standard astrological teaching, and would be challenged by most modern astrologers.

5. This analogy should be considered with caution; the interconnection is one of harmonics, as in the partial series or overtones defined in music. In this acoustic phenomenon, much-beloved by metaphysicians, series of vibrations are connected in mathematically definable sequences. While we seem to hear only 'one note' from a musical instrument or a voice, entire cycles of 'other notes' are physically present. Some individuals are able to hear the cycles, or series of partials, quite clearly, while others cannot, and must detect them by equipment or physical analysis of 'visible' sound-waves moving fine powders or other sensitive media. It is the selection of some of these subtle harmonics that gives us our well-known major and minor chords and scales; these are the 'bucket-chains' of music, just as our entities are defined in metaphysics.

6. Brennan, M., *The Stars and The Stones*, London, 1983.

Pennick, N., *The Ancient Science of Geomancy*, London, 1979.

7. Platonic speculations appeared in the writings of the early Church fathers, but from the time of the establishment of the scholastic philosophy, Platonism fell into disrepute, with the philosophy of Aristotle being virtually identified with the orthodox Christian religion. To question Aristotle was almost a theological offence, until the Renaissance, when the philosophy of Plato was restored to its rightful place. We should note that in Plato's systems, oral lore was paramount, and that he regarded the written word as a mere adjunct to existing wisdom that was transferred by word of mouth.
8. This theme survived well into the nineteenth century, when parodies of ballads became popular, possibly through the influence of Charles Dickens' spiteful attacks upon traditional poetry and song.

Joe Muggins was buried the very next day  
And Nancy in less than a week;  
And out of his ashes a carrot did grow  
And out of her ashes a leek.

They grewed and they grewed to the top of the  
tower  
Till they wasn't let grow any more  
For they was cut down for to season the soup  
What was given away to the poor.

— Parody of the ballad 'Lord Lovell'

9. *Peredur Son of Evrawg. Mabinogion* (trans. J. Gantz, London, 1976). This Welsh tale repeatedly demonstrated the unity in duality of the Otherworld; Peredur also spies a flock of white sheep and a flock of black sheep on either side of a river. 'When a white sheep bleated a black sheep would cross the river and turn white; when a black sheep bleated, a white sheep would cross and turn black.' This polarity pattern is shown on the Tree of Life, which is a major conceptual model for esoteric students.

10. See Wimberley, L.C., *Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads*, New York, 1959.

11. 'King Henry' and 'The Marriage of Sir Gawain' (Child



Ballads 32 and 31) uphold this magical theme. In King Henry the magical woman is compared to 'the fiend that wons in hell', but by dawn she has become 'the fairest lady that ever was seen'. We find an inversion of this in Gerald of Wales, who relates that a Welshman obtained special powers by making love to a beautiful woman, but on awakening she was found to be a rough hairy monster. Gerald was a staunch Churchman, well trained in the subtle methods of using pagan lore in a deviant manner for propaganda.

12. Ample evidence for the oral origin of the Grail motif has been offered by scholars, and we find primal examples recurring in several of the stories in the *Mabinogion*, Irish sagas, and old Welsh poetry.

13. Due to the appearance of diagrams in nineteenth- and twentieth-century publications which derive from Eastern sources, it is often assumed that the art of arousing or controlling the power centres is an Eastern technique. The Western evidence lies in the early literary and poetical sources, and in the alchemical works which took up the oral and Mystery traditions into new graphic and intellectual forms, from the late medieval period through to the eighteenth century. For reasons dealt with in a later chapter, we should exclude the Renaissance use of the Qabalistic Tree from possible evidence of a Western system of development of the power centres. (See Chapter 8.)

14. The polarized variants of the interaction are also discussed in our Chapter 6, where a male image, the Guardian, is analysed. For female Travellers, the Guardian may be the prime focus for catalysis, but there is no firm rule that allows us to employ physical gender as a firm indication of the inner polarities.

15. Matarasso, P. (trans), *The Quest of the Holy Grail*, 1969.

16. See Diagram 5(a) for suggested basic polarities upon a Tree of Life glyph which has been cleared of accumulated literary or orthodox terminology.

17. See note 11 above.

18. The origin of Merlin is as a child born of a mortal mother and an Otherworld father. The classical reference is Apuleius *De Dio Socrates*, Chapter 6. The constant insistence within tradition of the intermarriage of humans and Otherworld beings should restrain us from assuming that such beings

are entirely 'psychic'; the overall picture is a confusion of several streams of Mystery tradition and ancient genetic magic.

19. Lady C. Guest (trans.), *Taliesin*, 1902. Part of the *Mabinogion* collection.

### Chapter Five: The Power of Taking

1. See Chapter 8 and related diagrams.
2. The use of Archangels in ritual is rather confused. They frequently appear in pagan-Christian contexts, as in the charms or prayers from the Gaelic people of Scotland; but in literary metaphysics, lists of angels are usually accompanied by stern injunctions not to use the names for invocation. (See the angelic diagrams of Kircher for examples.) In the modern 'Celtic' revival in both occultism and popular witchcraft, the Archangels are being replaced by native god-forms or goddess-forms. As the Wheel turns, so the names change, but the natures are attuned through harmonics of symbolism and remain constant.
3. Bain, G., *Celtic Art*, London, 1977.
4. Read, J., *Prelude to Chemistry*, 1939. This is a scientist's literary guide to alchemy, written for the general reader. Nevertheless, it remains as one of the best general reference sources and introductions available, and is essential reading for the student who wishes to make a general approach to the subject before going into individual texts in detail.
5. This relationship is revealed in the ballads only when we realize that the ancient goddess has been replaced by a witch, mysterious woman, or the Fairy Queen. Transformation also occurs in various other magical contexts, as discussed in our song examples.
6. MacCana, P., *Celtic Mythology*, London, 1975.
7. Ross, A., *Pagan Celtic Britain*, London, 1974.
8. This theory was originated by Sigmund Freud, and still acts as one of the foundations of several schools of psychology.
9. In Homer, the shades of the dead are enabled to speak by a sacrifice of blood within the UnderWorld; but it was generally accepted that physical death meant loss of memory in the after-life. The link between this primal belief and the magical operation of the Mysteries is suggested in Chapter 7.
9. Gray, W.G., *Magical Ritual Methods*, 1969.

10. Shown in Read (see note 4 above), Plate 59.

11. Ross, *op. cit.*, pages 326-8.

### Chapter Six: The Guardian and the Guide

1. Godwin, J., *Robert Fludd and Athanasius Kircher*, London, 1979.

2. The best-known figure who demonstrates this is Albert Einstein, who is said to have been poor at basic mathematics.

3. The *Mabinogion* 'Kilhwch and Olwen' demonstrates this theme in an expansive and complicated manner.

4. In 'Kilhwch and Olwen' a reverse sequence of this sort is given in the pursuit of Mabon, Son of Modron, who is the Primal Ancestor. By a progression of totem beasts, we are taken back in time, until only the oldest, the Salmon of Llyn Llyw, can tell where Mabon is to be found.

5. *Waters of the Gap* and *The Myth of King Bladud*. See my analysis of the story of King Bladud in both of the above.

6. Ross, A., *Pagan Celtic Britain*, London, 1974, pages 390-404.

7. The classical examples include the Labours of Hercules, the myth of Perseus, and the wanderings of Odysseus.

8. 'On that mound you will see a great black man, no smaller than two men of this world. He is keeper of the forest, and you will see a thousand wild animals grazing about him. Ask him where to go from the clearing. He will be cross with you, but nevertheless he will show you how to find what you seek.'

— 'Owein, or, The Countess of the Fountain', *Mabinogion*.

9. Child, F.J., *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 1890 (reprinted Dover Books, USA). See Ballads: 4/68/82/43/17/ for magical birds, 43/18/ 2/39/88/69/ for magical animals. These are only a selection from a large number in the ballad texts.

10. Most of the sexual/magical symbolism of the Lily in publication is shrouded in allusion. In Christian imagery this obscurity probably hides an initiatory or revelatory purpose. (See 'The Grail as Bodily Vessel', *At The Table of The Grail*), 1984.

Also: Jennings, H., *The Rosicrucians*, London, 1887.

11. Muck, O. (trans.), *The Secret of Atlantis*, London, 1978.  
Spence, L., *The History of Atlantis*, London.

— *Occult sciences in Atlantis*, London.

12. Graves, R., *The White Goddess*, 1961. This famous work on poetical symbolism is built around Be-Spelling; but it also holds a deliberate joke at the expense of the unwary reader, the thread of which weaves through the entire book.

13. See Ross, op. cit., for examples from archaeology.

14. We are most familiar with these in the stories of Genii, guardian entities who are terrible and yet may confer three wishes.

15. The progression or so-called evolution of schools of consciousness technique is roughly as follows:

- (a) primal nature practices;
- (b) the protean pagan religions and Mysteries;
- (c) political Christianity;
- (d) modern psychology and related mental therapies.

Only the last two have allocated to themselves the role of sole guardianship of the human development.

16. A fragment of this is retained in modern Parliamentary ritual in Britain. In the ballad 'Lord Bateman' the role of the Porter is found in oral tradition (see Part Two). See also the numerous examples of Portership in the *Mabinogion*. In *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians* (1788) an illustration of the world-relationships includes 'Seek the friendship of Archaeo, the confidant doorkeeper.'

17. Mead, G.R.S., *The Hymn of Jesus*, London, 1963.

18. Job 28:28; Psalms 111:10; Proverbs 1:7;

19. Graves, R., *The White Goddess*. (See note 12.)

20. Many modern occultists have become involved in projects of redemption, attempting to attune ancient sites and symbols to those of the Christian Saviour. The work of Dr Gareth Knight has been particularly influential in projects of this type. Work of redemption, however, is not dogmatically religious; it is a metaphysical and magical operation, not an evangelical crusade. This is best illustrated by a quote from an Innerworld teacher:

Question: 'Why do ancient Innerworld beings such as sacred Kings, Atlanteans, have to be realigned through a human mediating ritual? Does this not conflict with the

theory of Redemption offered in standard religion?

Answer: 'The seeming dichotomy between the Redemption of the Ancients and the orthodox Christian teaching of Salvation is an illusion born of time-bondage. In your world the Saviour manifested through human birth; in other worlds He or She manifests in other ways. So those that were in the time-encircled world at a period before the Incarnation appear to be Redeemed only through an action of the physical human body. Your incarnation is now an harmonic of the Saviour's Incarnation, as all human beings now partake equally of His Body in your group world. Only the living may mediate their Ancestors through to a new cycle in the Inner Worlds, as only those in Incarnation partake of the Christ consciousness rooted in the planet; other beings partake of the consciousness in other ways.'

### **Chapter Seven: The Summoning of the Ancestors**

1. (See note 1, Chapter 2)

Seeger, P., and MacColl, E., *Travellers Song from England and Scotland*, London, 1977.

Sharp, C., *English Folksongs from the Southern Appalachians* (2 vols.), 1960.

2. Steiner, R., *The Occult Significance of Blood*.

3. One of the few modern occultists in publication who is familiar with this ancient system is W.G. Gray, who has been instrumental in the revival of magical techniques in the West.

4. Mann, A.T., *The Round Art*, England, 1979.

5. In popular occultism this faculty is known as the 'opening of the Third Eye', due to the influence of Madam Blavatsky and later Theosophical Society works.

6. Evans, S., *History of The British Kings*, 1928. The Prophecies of Merlin are included in Geoffrey of Monmouth's larger work translated by various scholars.

### **Chapter Eight: The Tree of Life**

1. The late Dion Fortune suggested that the work of a blacksmith was less *physically* exhausting than that of a magician.

2. Our cover illustration is based upon proportional design, and is a Threefold Tree of Life. The various elements are

discussed in the notes on 'Thomas Rhymer' and 'Down in Yon Forest' in Part Two. Basic Tree of Life Diagrams and linear or topological Trees are found in Diagrams 1 and 5.

3. Fortune, D., *The Mystical Qabalah*, London, 1935.  
*The Work of the Chariot*: various translations and commentaries from the Hebrew sources.

4. *Mabinogion*.

5. Stirling, W., *The Canon*, 1981.

6. As with many of the founders of modern science, Kepler was an astrologer. His Three Laws were based upon observations made by the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe, but the concepts that he founded his work upon were those of Harmonics, which are essential to both astrology and Qabalah. Kepler's Laws enabled another astrologer, Newton, to formulate the law of gravitation.

7. Stirling, op. cit.

8. Matarasso, P. (trans.), *The Quest of the Holy Grail*, 1969.  
Matthews, J. (ed.), *At the Table of the Grail*, London, 1984.

9. Knight, G., *A History of White Magic*, London, 1978.

10. Gray, W.G., *The Ladder of Lights*, 1968; *Magical Ritual Methods*, 1969.

Gray suggests the use of an English alphabet and a fairly radical reappraisal of the Path sequence upon the Tree of Life. He employs a Path system of harmonic relationship which is lucid and practical, though not in keeping with other systems of modern publicized Path attributions.

11. Regardie, I., *The Golden Dawn*, USA.

12. A simple system of 'Elemental Calls' can be generated from the basic notes of the musical scale, as I have demonstrated in a number of lectures and recordings between 1975 and the present time.

13. The much-publicized instance of Dee and Kelly's 'wife-swapping' at the instigation of 'spirits' may indicate experiments with pagan fertility and sexual magic, rather than mere gratification. If this is the case, then Dee's daughter would have been an incarnation of the spirit child first encountered through clairvoyance.

14. Mayo, J., *Astrology*, London, 1979.

## **Appendix 2: The Rosicrucian Vault as Sepulchre and Wedding Chamber**

1. Apocatastases is Greek for 'The End or Restoration of

All Things'. It is a concept familiar to Qabalists as the *Tikkun*. Origen's use of this theory in his cosmological speculation is mirrored in Valentinian Gnosis. Both are close to the Buddhist model.

2. An Orphic inscription; a common theme in Classical mystery schools. See Godwin, Joscelyn, *Mystery Religions in the Ancient World*, Thames & Hudson, 1981.

3. Matarasso, P. (ed. and trans.), *Queste del San Graal*, Penguin, 1969.

4. The way of involution and evolution is clearly expounded in *Quadriga*, No. 14, Summer 1980, in Gareth Knight's essay 'Esoteric Training in Everyday Life'.

5. Langland, William, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, Dent & Sons, 1978, passus XVIII, lines 231-40. Spelling modernized by C. Matthews.

6. The ancients believed dew to be the sweat of the stars. The emblem of dew permeates medieval Christian tradition. The antiphon for the time of Advent and Christ's coming is 'Rorate Caelie desuper': 'Ye heavens, let fall your dew from above and let the clouds rain down the Just One.' The medieval carol,

He came all so still,  
Where his mother was,  
As dew in april  
That falleth on the grass

beautifully conveys this concept of conception. In Qabalistic tradition, dew is shed from the Tree of Life which will revive the dead.

7. Lydgate, John (1370-1450), 'Like A Midsummer Rose'. In *Oxford Book of Medieval English Verse*, Oxford University Press, 1970.

8. Shere Thursday is Maunday Thursday. The day upon which, variously, folk were shriven or shaved their beards preparatory to Easter Day. Also the title of a magnificent poem by David Jones in his *Anathamata*. Friday of course, derives from Freya's Day — the Norse Venus.

9. *Fama Fraternitatis*

10. This story appears in the Greek Apocryphal *Acts of Pilate* (c.f. M.R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford

University Press, 1924). It is a motif which reoccurs in the Grail texts, particularly in *Queste del San Graal*, op. cit. Seth sees through Eden's gates a dry tree, a serpent hanging in a dry tree, and a child sitting in a green tree, each image being a prefiguring of Christ. Similarly C.R. and companions go to the Tower of Olympus in the Chymical Wedding in order to heal the Royal Persons: a typos of Paradise.

11. *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*.

12. These were, respectively, Irish and Welsh titles of a genus of story dealing with the Youthful Exploits of the hero: an art-form in its own right as was the medieval French genre, the *enfances*. In Christian Ireland and Wales, the same kind of stories were told about Christ: in Wales, the Christ-Child is still called Mabon.

13. This is irresistibly reminiscent of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, where Alice progresses from Pawn to Queen. In the light of this, the parable of the Wedding Guest (Matthew 22:1-24) can be seen as a species of initiatory story.

14. Initiates of both Mithraic and Cybelene mysteries partook of this rite, wherein a bull was slain so that its blood flowed through a perforated floor onto the candidate in a pit below the sacrifice. The cult of Cybele is more apposite to the Rosicrucian impulse, as her initiates were men who castrated themselves in her honour — a total allegiance. See Vermaseren, Maarten J., *Cybele and Attis*, Thames & Hudson, 1977.

15. The *Dies Sanguinem* commemorated the ritual flagellation of Cybele's priests, in mourning for Attis. A taurobolium was also held on this day — 22 March. The lenten rituals of Spain retain elements of this cult. The Hilaria commemorated the mystic resurrection of Attis on 25 March. It is not difficult to make the analogy between these celebrations and those of Holy Week.

16. The priest of Nemi held his office until successfully overcome in combat by another candidate. See Frazer, J.G., *The Golden Bough*, Macmillan, 1922.

17. The theme of a substitute porter is curiously common in oral tradition. Grimms's story, 'The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs' tells of 'a foolish boy who knew everything', who is sent to hell to obtain three golden hairs of the devil,



by his wicked father-in-law. On the borders of hell he meets a ferryman who is weary of his endless duty. The boy promises to relieve him of his duty if he will help him perform his task. By a series of clever questions and answers, the boy returns from hell, and spins a yarn about the amount of gold in hell, so that his father-in-law goes thither. The ferryman relinquishes his paddle into the wicked father-in-law's hands and is thus released, leaving the dupe to fulfil the office of Charon.

The folksong, *The Maid and the Palmer* — a variant of the Cruel Mother — charges a mother who has slain her children that her punishment will be 'seven long years a-portering in hell'. (*Child Ballads* 20 and 21)

18. Thomas, J.W., *Tannhauser: Poet and Legend*, University of North Carolina Press, 1974.

19. See further Matthews, John and Caitlin, *The Western Way*, vol. 1, Routledge & Kegan Paul (Spring 1985) for a discussion of the native shamanic role.

20. Guest, Lady Charlotte, *The Mabinogion*, Dean & Sons, 1906.

21. Jones, David, *In Parenthesis*, Faber, 1937.

22. From a sequence, O Ecclesia, in honour of St Ursula by Abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179). A record with this sequence is available: *A Feather on the Breath of God* (Gothic Voices, Hyperion A66039.) Trans. Caitlin Matthews.

23. Lest I be accused of fabricating this narrative, I refer the reader to the *Apocryphal New Testament* (op. cit.) and the *Nag Hammadi Library*, Brill, 1977, as well as to *Gnosis* by Kurt Rudolph, T.T. Clark Ltd, 1983. The symbolic resonances and their relevant texts will be found therein, as well as in the works of Thoman Vaughan.

24. Drower, E.S. *The Secret Adam: a study of Nasorean Gnosis*, Open University Press, 1960.

25. *Dialogues of the Saviour*, in *Nag Hammadi Library* (op.cit.). There is a textual lacuna in this question.

26. Vaughan, Thomas, *Lumen de Lumine* in *The Works of Thomas Vaughan*, ed. A.E. Waite, University Books, New York, 1968.

27. *Theatrum Chemicum*, 1659.

28. Vaughan, op. cit., *Anima Magica Abscondita*.

29. The Two Maries — the Virgin and the Magdalene are

manifest examples of Sophia Stellarum and Sophia Nigrans, and mediators of those specific energies: as vehicles of Christ's incarnation and ministry, their position is pivotal. Christian tradition has always esoterically understood both figures in their true sense: exoteric tradition has worked hard to simplify the roles of virgin and whore, but even these bare titles are significantly appropriate.

30. Vaughan, op. cit., *Anima Magica Abscondita*.

31. Vaughan, op. cit., *Eugenius Philalathes his Magical Aphorisms*.



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